

SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

March 4, 1997

Present: Bob Fay, Dale Witman, Pat Sicard, Patti Berry, Dianne Holden, Bertha McAloon, Nancy Brandt, Brenda Charland, Millard Genthner, Bob Gobeil, Payson MacCormack, Pam and Jason L'Heureux, Arthur Smith, Elias Smith, Tom Jones, Neal Courtney.

APPOINTMENTS

7:00 Dianne Holden, Nancy Brandt, Bertha McAloon enter meeting at selectmen's request to discuss why selectmen did not make a recommendation on the warrant for town meeting, and why as a Board, they aren't making a recommendation at town meeting either. Dale Witman states that the requests are from the elected officials and the Board decided to stay out of it. Nancy states that the Road commissioner is an elected official and they made recommendations on those articles. Dale states that the moneys voted in for road commissioner are to be spent under the direction of the Board of Selectmen. Dianne states that on the financial worksheets a recommendation appears from the selectmen, and that there is a variance put in comparing prior years and wanted to know why those are the only three departments with that comparison. She wants to know how she should interpret that. Dale says that their budgets include a very large increase and he thinks some explanations should be given. He would like to draw attention to the last page, where there are explanations for other large increases, like workman's comp. And the Code enforcement office. Dale says the key is what appears on the warrant. The financial statements are for budgetary purposes only, and for the use of the selectmen, not for printing for the general public. Dale feels there is a sensitivity that the three elected positions are being singled out and he would like to abate those fears. In an effort to move town meeting along it has always been the desire to be as close in requests as possible. Dale will be meeting with the finance committee on Thursday for this very reason.

Bob Fay states that his feelings are that he cannot support such a large increase. He supports a 4% increase. He doesn't care what the finance committee recommends, he will deal with it at town meeting.

Dale states that town meeting will be governed by the will of the people, he supports that, that is democracy. He would like to go into town meeting as close to united as we can.

Bob Fay says that although he doesn't personally support the increases in the requests, he commends each and every one at town hall for a good year. The three elected officials have been a big part of that. People are happy with how they are being served at town hall.

Dale Witman states that town hall friendliness is enhanced. He has heard a lot of good things.

Bertha McAloon asks the selectmen what their feelings are on health insurance. Bob Fay says that he has never had insurance for elected officials. That is what he supports. Bertha says that she works side by side with Margaret for the same salary and she feels it is not fair that one gets insurance and one doesn't. She feels she works just as hard and she is the deputy to Margaret. For these reasons she really resents the fact that she doesn't have insurance coverage.

Dale says that needs to be said at town meeting.

Dianne says that excluding elected officials from health insurance coverage is a selectmen decision not a town meeting vote.

Bob says that there is a distinction between elected and non-elected employees. Bertha says that is fine if the tax collector works out of their home, but this is the 90's.

Dale gives an example of the county's system of covering employees and not elected people. Dianne says that she can give examples of towns that do cover elected employees; she could give a positive for every negative and they could go on all night on these lines.

Bob Fay says that if these positions stay elected, it is time to sit down and re look at this, and when we deal with the personnel policy, maybe there should be an update concerning this. He has always felt that elected officials don't have to run.

Dale Witman states that the personnel policy will be amended this year.

Nancy brings up the subject of moderator for town meeting. Dianne says if it is contested the whole town meeting could be thrown out. The possibility is there. Dale asks on what grounds could it be contested. Because a relative of Willis's is on the ballot. Dale states that the people vote in the moderator. Dianne states that if it is contested, it wouldn't matter how he became moderator if it went to court. Bob Fay says it is traditional for Willis to be moderator. Dianne says it is the law. Dale says he understands there is a statute dealing with splitting moderator in this case. Dianne states that the ballot polls are not supposed to be at the same time and place as the warrant articles. We are only one of two communities in the state that do that now. Dale asks Nancy as the Town Clerk to get the state statute on that. Dianne says that the Town Clerk is only in charge until the moderator is elected.

Nancy asks about microfilming. The old assessing record books need to be done before we lose them. Dale says to continue along with microfilming.

At this time Pam L'Heureux asks the selectmen about street signs for E911. Pat Sicard tells Pam to contact her and they as a team can research the best prices. Bob Gobeil asks that they check into signs that can't be easily taken by kids.

7:50 Elias Smith and Neal Courtney enter meeting at the selectmen's request to discuss the Fire Department becoming part of municipal government as a result of the survey being done by Neal Courtney. Bob Fay asks Elias if the fire department had a vote? Elias says yes (that it was unanimous) and asks what is the next step. Bob Fay says that we will get a legal opinion from MMA on how we do this. Dale says a lot of difficult issues need to be addressed. Neal Courtney states that although the fire department will be under town government, they could still have an association where they raise money for whatever charity's they might want do. Bob Fay says we will start by getting direction from MMA before we get our attorney into it. Neal C. says all these things need to be ironed out before it goes to a town meeting. Bob asks if the selectmen will receive a written report from Neal of his survey. Neal says yes, by all means. Bob says after we get our information from MMA, Neal might want to meet with Pat for more discussion. Neal will have recommendations as to the status of the equipment. Bob asks Elias about the Knight's property that was given for East Waterboro Fire department. Will it revert back to the Knight's? Elias said that Buddy asked if we ever wanted to get rid of the property to give him first refusal. Bob says that Elias and Neal should meet with Pat Sicard after we get MMA opinion on how to proceed, then there can be a series of meetings with the selectmen. Pat says this is not going to be a quick process. Bob says he wouldn't wait too long to begin it. He then asks Brenda Charland and Payson MacCormack what their opinions are, since one of them will be the next selectmen. They both agree that this is a good idea to have the fire department under town government. Pat Sicard explains how this has come about. Everyone involved has agreed separately that it would be a good idea. This is the first time we've sat down together to discuss it. We will have a step by step process. Neal states that once we've agreed the process splits, he will continue to survey the equipment, etc for the fire department, and the town will design how to put the departments together. Dale asks Neal what the target date for completion of his survey. Neal states that he had been trying for February but it should be another 4 or 5 weeks. He is very gratified to see us going this route. Dale asks about the fire tower. He thought that in the spring it would be turned back over to Waterboro by the forestry department. Pat S. informs Dale that as of April 1 the tower is ours again. Bob Fay states that we will all get together after town meeting.

DISCUSSION

Dianne Holden submitted a written request for the selectmen to discuss the town's tax title property ordinance. Bob Fay says to send our current ordinance to Karen Lovell and for her to word an addition so that we don't have to have a special article at town meeting to decide to foreclose on property or not. Dale agrees.

Pat Sicard reports that she received a final sketch from Alpha One on the renovations of the ramps and are included in the packets for Friday.

Pat also reports that she, Elias Smith, and Ginny Pare' met with Patrick Williams from Me. Employers Mutual to start a process of a risk management program, which should help to get our premiums down. Bob Fay asks about a public safety division or

commission set up for town government. Pat says that this will be a safety committee. Bob clarifies that he is asking about a public safety department, we might want to check with MMA. Pat says we will need to be very supportive of this. There will be a check list for everyone to follow, road contractors, everyone.

Pat reports that a process has been started with Parks and Recreation liability, to get background checks on all people who work with children. It is all done above board, people will know they are being checked. Art Smith asks, is this information available to us? Pat says yes, it is a national check. Bob asks is this for all committee members or just employees? Pat says that it is really just for people who are working with children. The person has to sign a form giving permission to be checked. Bob Gobeil asks are we going to start that this summer. Pat says yes.

Dale Witman reports that he has requested from Dianne Holden some financial information as compared to last year. He should have that on Thursday.

Dale asks if Fred got back to us on the height of the street light in South Waterboro. Pat says he called and reported that the light is 14 feet from the pavement to the bottom of the light which is not up to the specs in the contract with the Electric Light Co.

Dale makes a request that a person conduct a prayer after the pledge of allegiance. Bob has no objections. Pat says is OK with her.

Dale makes a motion that Pat get a bulletin board for front entranceway to clean it up and a decal of the town emblem for the window. Pat suggests that this wait until the reconstruction of the ramp is done.

Pat reports that Fred Fay is working on getting permission to move the mailboxes at the end of West Shore Road.

SIGNED

The Board of Selectmen signed the Warrant for Bills and Payroll.

They also signed:

1. 2 requests from Me State Police for background checks.
2. letter to Sheriff's dept. RE stop sign at New Dam Road.
3. letter to St. Police RE stop sign at New Dam Road.
4. minutes for selectmen meeting of 2/28.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion for adjournment was made at 8:30.

APPROVED Date 3/18/97

 