

MINUTES OF HAVERHILL SELECTBOARD REGULAR MEETING
Monday, January 11, 2016
Draft Subject to Review, Correction and Approval at Following Meeting

Board Members Present: Wayne Fortier, Tom Friel, Rick Ladd and Robert Maccini

Town Manager: Glenn English

Administrative Assistant/Finance Officer: Jo Lacaillade

Selectboard Clerk: Karen Hyde

Members of the Public Present: Mike Penkert, Darwin Clogston, Howard Hatch and Ed Ballam – Journal Opinion

Call Meeting to Order:

Chairman Fortier called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Approval (additions/deletions completed by Board consent): Chairman Fortier asked to have a Resignation added to New Business. Tom Friel made a motion to accept the amended agenda; seconded by Rick Ladd and carried unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Tom Friel made a motion to accept the consent agenda; seconded by Robert Maccini and carried unanimously.

Scheduled Public Appearance(s): There were no scheduled public appearances, but Chairman Fortier asked if anyone in the public wanted to address the Board. Mike Penkert of Pike had an issue that he wished to discuss with the Board. Mr. Penkert stated that he had not been to a Board meeting in years and years to which Chairman Fortier commented “Shame on you”. Mr. Penkert came to the meeting because of recent newspaper articles and comments Chairman Fortier had made at the Cohase Chamber annual meeting regarding hard-working people having a hard time to pay their tax bills and a discussion about consolidating schools and selling the elementary school because it was prime commercial real estate and building a new school. Mr. Penkert stated that those two comments are opposed to each other – higher tax rates and building a new school. He commented that a new school costs a lot of money. Some years ago when the Middle School was built, the state was still contributing 60% to new construction. Rick Ladd stated that this was the school building aid and yes, this community would be a 60%, but this was no longer occurring. There was a moratorium. Mr. Penkert went on to comment that building a new school takes years of planning. He went on to comment that when the new County jail was built, all Grafton County paid for that and the tax bill went up a “blip and a half”. He was a little surprised about those comments coming from the Selectboard as opposed from the School District and he wanted to know if that process has started. Chairman Fortier stated that that process has been in existence for about 2½ years and it comes in the form of a school committee known as the Strategic Planning Committee. The Committee has gotten together 2½ years ago and they continue to meet on a monthly basis. On March 16, they will start going back to bi-monthly meetings because a firm has been hired to look at different options that have been talked about. One of the options the School Board had directed the Committee to do was to look at space needs and possible future development. The space needs at Woodsville Elementary are very, very tight and there is no room to hold a private conference with a parent to discuss an IEP. Given the fact that it sits where it does, it seems like it is the easiest piece of school property that could be sold with some benefit. The Committee has hired a consulting firm, Black River Design out of Montpelier, VT, who has been looking at the various options, the land and possible prices. The work is progressing and they are getting ready for a possible bond vote on October 26, 2016. The Committee hasn’t bombarded the public with that yet because they haven’t fully decided what options they would go. Those options range from going from three (3) campuses down to one (1) and

bringing the High School down there and building a new facility. Currently there are two options that are of interest to the Committee and one is to give up Woodsville Elementary School, add on to the Middle School and make that a pre-K to 8th facility. The Committee realizes that there is more time needed to discuss what they would want to do with the High School because the Board and the School Board has met with Blue Mountain Board to see if there was any way that those two establishments could come together. He doesn't think that Blue Mountain is in a position to make that decision yet, but neither are they. The discussions are ongoing. It is a conversation that the entire community is going to have to have. Mr. Penkert asked if any little blurbs had been sent out about it and Chairman Fortier stated that it had not been. Chairman Fortier thought that the Strategic Planning Committee Minutes were on the SAU #23 website and Mr. Penkert could go there and see what the nature and tone has been. The Committee is not quite ready to go with a full court public relations bombardment yet. Mr. Penkert asked how much the consultant had cost and Chairman Fortier stated that over a period of time, it was about \$78,000. They hadn't paid that yet and the last figure he heard they had spent was \$58,000. The firm has designs and layouts; they are doing real-time cost analyses as to what options the Committee might seriously want to consider. The Committee is very pleased with the work product that they have received so far and this will be presented to the public in the not-too-distant future. There will be five (5) public hearings scheduled for public discussions on these between now and October. The Committee will have schematics and any option that was rejected they want to defend why. As a Selectboard member at the Cohase Chamber annual meeting, he did mention the progress of that Committee because it is important to the Town as well. They are looking for more communication between the Town and the school system. Mr. Penkert stated that he was not totally in the dark. Chairman Fortier went on to say that this would come to light very soon and they need a Townwide discussion on this. Mr. Penkert asked if the meetings would be posted and Chairman Fortier stated that they would be posted on the bulletin board and also the SAU website. He also said that the meetings would be the third Wednesday of each month and starting March 16, it would be twice a month and always on a Wednesday at 6:30 at the Morrill building.

Howard Hatch stated that he didn't write his name on the sign-up sheet, because TM English had answered his question about packets for the Budget Committee. He was a little concerned about coming to a Budget Committee meeting and receiving paperwork and having to make decisions within minutes of receiving the information. The Selectboard had received packets a couple of weeks beforehand and he would like to see if it's possible to receive handouts ahead of time if the Board is in agreement with that. Chairman Fortier stated that the first Budget Committee meeting was an introduction. Howard commented that it was an introduction but they went right into the budget. AA Lacaillade and TM English stated that Howard wanted details and they had told Howard that those would be provided to him.

Public Hearing: None

Town Manager's Report: TM English stated that he passed. Chairman Fortier asked TM English how his trip to Concord went. TM English stated that he had been on a mission that day to review proposed legislation and it was about a 3-hour exercise. He commented that the Board would be amazed at some of the bills that were introduced. There was one to outlaw bestiality, which was his favorite. There are some that are serious. He didn't see any that were ominous in terms of the towns. The only one that concerns him a little bit is there a couple of bills on the rooms-and-meals tax. Some of the towns that claim they generate more revenue from tourism want a bigger piece of that pie and there is legislation to give the Towns more revenue more of the money. There is also legislation to allow certain towns to have their own little rooms-and-meals tax to be added on to the state tax. The rooms-and-meals tax is a big revenue producer for Haverhill, so if there is any legislation to change around the formula, they would want to pay attention to that. There are a lot of education bills. There are also a lot of bills on drones and how they are to be managed or not managed. There was a lot of stuff on planning. It was quite a collection of legislation, but nothing to panic about. Rick Ladd stated that he could follow up on the school building aid. There is a bill in the hopper; his committee addressed it just the other day where the formula now is 30-60% of what is requested would come back to the town, you would get 80% at the initial start of the project and the remaining 20% upon project completion. The bill that is coming forward helps in terms of the application. It talks about giving more points to school districts which are going to be consolidating or resulting in cost efficiencies and savings in operating the building or in saving property taxes. There is another portion of that bill that reduces aid from 25% to 55% so instead of the 30-60% trying to

squeeze out a few more projects. There are over 475 schools in the State of which over half of those are over 50 years old. In FY '07, there was about \$240 million worth of grant applications coming into the State and that resulted in the \$540 million debt that there was 8 years ago and which caused the moratorium. When the moratorium is lifted, if it is lifted, it will be for FY 17 and 18. The applications, if they come in when the moratorium is lifted, need to be ready to go right then and there. They will be acted upon September 15 in which it opens up. Rick stated that he wouldn't give up hope there might be money available.

Pending (Old) Business:

- **Town Manager vs. Town Administrator Form of Government:** Chairman Fortier stated that the Board had held their second Work Session with the Primex representative to discuss this issue. They had discussed goals and objectives that the Board would like to undertake. They made a decision and Mr. Ladd wanted to speak to the issue. Rick Ladd made the motion that the Selectmen, upon the Town Manager's departure on the specified date that he has indicated, continue with the Town Management form of government; seconded by Tom Friel. There was further discussion on the motion. Rick stated that there was a very good Work Session with Rick Alpers of Primex, which was open to the public from 1:30-4:30. They covered a lot of ground and looked at where they want to go in terms of goals and form of governance which they would like to have in this Town. They looked at the Town Manager form of government, the Town Administrator form of government, and the Administrative Assistant form. The significant difference between the Town Manager and the Town Administrator/Administrative Assistant form of government is that the Town Manager is governed by RSA 37 and that gives responsibility for hiring and firing personnel directly to the Town Manager. Under the Town Administrator form of government, the Town Administrator does not have statutory language supporting him or her unless it's through some other statute in which they are doing a function which applies to all towns regardless of what form of government they are in. The policies that the Board makes are the policies of how much control a Town Administrator is given. Rick stated that the primary concern of all at the table was leadership. The individual who is hired to replace TM English must have those qualities and understands the goals and directions. Rick amended his motion to include the Board immediately beginning the hiring process; seconded by Tom Friel. Mr. Maccini commented that in March, 4 of the 5 Selectboard seats would be open for reelection, but a change in Town government at that time, would be chaotic for the Town. Rick commented that it could bring in a lot of politics and they want to run a Town government and deal with issues. Tom concurred with Mr. Maccini. All were in favor of the motion.

New Business:

- **Mileage Reimbursement rate 2016:** AA Lacaillade stated at the beginning of every year, the IRS website is checked for the mileage reimbursement rate. This year, it went down from \$.575 per mile to \$.54 per mile and she is asking the Board to consider lowering the mileage rate to \$.54 per mile. There was a brief discussion on the difference in the price of gas between Haverhill and Plymouth. Tom Friel made the motion to lower the mileage rate to \$.54 per mile; seconded by Rick Ladd and carried unanimously.
- **Pole License-Eversource:** AA Lacaillade stated that she had pole licenses for two (2) Eversource replacement poles on French Pond Road and one on Jeffers Hill Road. The Road Agent has reviewed the licenses and is happy with the new placement of the poles. Robert Maccini made the motion to approve the pole licenses; seconded by Tom Friel and carried unanimously.
- **Haverhill Town War Memorial:** Chairman Fortier stated that in January of last year, two Woodsville High School students, Dennis Rupprecht and Joseph D'Angelo, had approached the Board to request some work be done on a Haverhill Town War Memorial. The Board directed the students to the VFW and the American Legion, which they have done. They went out and did some work with TM English and took some pictures. The VFW voted unanimously last month to allow the Town of Haverhill to erect a Haverhill Town War Memorial on the south end of their field. This week, the American Legion will vote on this also. The Board contacted Dennis and asked for some sort of schematic. Earlier this spring, Chairman Fortier, the American Legion Commander, the VFW Commander, and Terry Impey, who owns the abutting embankment, looked at the site and it is just a wonderful site. They were

concerned about the tree growth on the bank and Mr. Impey stated that they could cut any trees they wanted as long as they cleaned it up. Jack Brill has done a 10-year project on establishing well over 600 names of people who have served from the Town of Haverhill in World War II. The list is in the hall of the Morrill Building. This would be a long project. The first phase would be establishing three flag poles at the site and some shrubbery closest to the back. Chairman Fortier was asking the Board to approve a Warrant to be put on by the Board for the creation of the Town of Haverhill War Memorial and to designate \$1,000 for start-up costs. He is requesting this on behalf of the VFW and the American Legion. Dennis was aware of what was wanted and he has created a schematic. Members of the VFW and the American Legion will hopefully meet soon with the school officials and take a look at the schematic. Chairman Fortier feels this is a well worthwhile endeavor for the Town of Haverhill. Rick Ladd made the motion to authorize a Warrant Article be placed on the annual Warrant to support the creation of a Haverhill Town War Memorial in the sum of \$1,000; seconded by Robert Maccini and carried unanimously. Rick asked if the Memorial was going to be war specific and Chairman Fortier stated that the intent was to recognize all veterans from all wars. Ed Ballam suggested \$5,000 and Rick thought that \$1,000 would be good and then have fundraisers. The motion would remain as is.

- **Resignation:** Chairman Fortier stated that on December 28, 2015, he had received a letter from Lynn Wheeler, expressing her desire to resign from the Board. He had spoken with Lynn and she was upbeat, but “worn out” and had a lot of things going on. He thanked her for her service. He read her letter to the Board. Lynn expressed to Chairman Fortier that she would like to remain connected, possibly as a friend, in the Recreation Commission. Robert Maccini made the motion to accept Lynn Wheeler’s letter of resignation with regret; seconded by Tom Friel and carried unanimously.

Commission/Committee Reports: None

Correspondence: Chairman Fortier stated that there was an informational sheet on Hard Road to Travel, a seminar which the Road Agent was going to attend. The Board had received the January 8, 2016 issue of the Legislative Bulletin. The Board had received Northern Views, which is put out by North Country Council.

Comments of the Public: Darwin Clogston asked if the Board was looking to fill Lynn’s seat. Chairman Fortier stated “not immediately”.

Comments of the Town Manager/Administrative Assistant-Finance Officer: AA Lacaillade stated that they had discussed at the last meeting the TAN from Woodsville Guaranty. Robert Maccini made a motion to approve the \$3.5 million TAN with WGSB at 1.5% on the money used; seconded by Rick Ladd and carried unanimously.

Comments of Selectboard Members: Tom Friel commented that the Work Session had been extremely productive. It was also his personal opinion that when other issues come up, Work Sessions should be considered before a Selectboard meeting. The Work Sessions help with the decision-making process. Rick asked TM English if he had a listing of all the land that the Town owns that is not being used. TM English stated that it isn’t a list. Rick then asked him if there were any more properties like the one in Mountain Lakes. TM English stated that there was one other parcel that is in the name of Mountain Lakes that should be in the Town’s name. Chairman Fortier asked TM English for a list by the next meeting on January 25, 2016 and TM English stated that it would be tough this time of year, but he would do his best.

Adjourn Meeting: Robert Maccini made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Rick Ladd and all approved. Chairman Fortier adjourned at 6:47 pm.

Minutes transcribed by Karen Hyde