

MINUTES OF HAVERHILL SELECTBOARD WORK SESSION
Thursday, February 5, 2015
Draft Subject to Review, Correction and Approval at Following Meeting

Board Members Present: Wayne Fortier, Tom Friel, Lynn Wheeler, Rick Ladd and Robert Roudebush

Town Manager: Glenn English

Administrative Assistant/Finance Officer: Jo Lacaillade

Selectboard Clerk: Karen Hyde

Others in Attendance: RA Stuart McDanolds and Darwin Clogston

Work Session (Called to Order at 7:00 PM):

Chairman Fortier stated that everyone should have an updated budget with the current information reflecting the results of the Advisory Budget Committee. The Board was meeting to discuss a few things. It was imperative that the Board made decisions that evening as there were a Bond Hearing and a Budget Hearing scheduled for Wednesday, February 11, 2015. TM English noted that there could be no votes that evening as it was a Work Session. The Board would take any actions that required a vote of approval on the budget at their regular scheduled meeting on February 9, 2015. Chairman Fortier also mentioned that the Airport Petition needed to be discussed. TM English stated that the Petition would be on the Warrant and the Board could take a position, but they were not required to take a position. Chairman Fortier asked if that were the case with the Bond also and TM English stated that the Board had to take a position on the Bond. The Board decided to discuss the Bond first.

Chairman Fortier asked Robert Roudebush what his thoughts were on the Bond. Robert replied that they have been kicking around this issue for a couple of years. He thought that the voters should have a chance to decide on this issue. Tom Friel stated that he had mixed feelings about the Bond; there were pros and cons looking at the tax rate, which scared him. He agreed with Rick Ladd that crack seal and fill should not be a part of the bond, but done as regular road maintenance. Tom felt that they shouldn't do more than a \$1 million bond; he liked Howard Hatch's idea. He also felt that the voters should have the chance to decide. Lynn Wheeler asked if they decided to do the bond, was the interest rate locked in at 2.69% or were they open to the interest rate at the time they started paying back in 2016. TM English replied that the 2.69% was only an estimate. If the bond passed, they have to shop around for an interest rate. TM English's recommendation would be to put it out to bid. Lynn Wheeler stated that she was asking because she had heard from her constituents that the interest rate was going to be going up. Chairman Fortier asked if construction would begin in 2016 and TM English stated that as soon as the bond is appropriated, construction could begin. Lynn then stated that she had reservations about going for the bond. Chairman Fortier stated that there was one (1) reservation about the bond and two (2) that felt the voters should have a chance to decide. Lynn stated that she didn't feel they should go for the \$1,695,785. Tom and Lynn both stated that the crack seal and fill should be absorbed into the regular Highway budget, as they then wouldn't be paying interest on it. Chairman Fortier then asked Rick Ladd where he stood on the bond. His feelings were that the voters should have the chance to decide, but he wasn't ready to present it the way it was right now. Chairman Fortier was of the opinion that the Board had to have the voters' approval of the bond. Lynn stated that when they had the Bond Hearing on February 11, 2015, the Board would get an idea of whether or not to continue with the bond.

Chairman Fortier asked RA Stuart McDanolds if he had seen the NCC study and Stuart replied that he had seen it briefly. Chairman Fortier stated that he understood how the schedule was set up. The priorities were to fix the better roads right away to keep them that way and roads like Lily Pond were on the very bottom because they will require a lot of reconstruction. Chairman Fortier was asking Stuart to examine the study and then as Road Agent let the Board know what his feelings were on the priorities.

Chairman Fortier commented that if the Board didn't go with the bond, that in the past, the roads were attended to in the manner of pay-as-you-go. If the Board goes with pay-as-you-go, the Tar budget would need more funds. The study did not address any gravel roads. He stated that there had been no reconstruction or "beefed up" gravel roads. TM English stated that there had been upgrades on Woodward Road and Moody Road. Chairman Fortier asked RA McDanolds to look at the NCC study and give the Board his opinion as to what is priorities would be. Another thing for him to bring to the Board would be what condition the gravel roads are in and what the priorities would be for attending to them. He then asked RA McDanolds if the Board goes with the pay-as-you-go methodology, what could be accomplished in five (5) years on both gravel and tar roads. TM English stated that it was very important how the NCC priorities were made. They were based on traffic counts, current conditions of the roads and the importance of the road to the transportation network. It was his feeling that RA McDanolds should use the same criteria as the NCC study. TM English stated that the study was only a plan. The plan would generate priorities. Tom thought outside consultants as extremely important. Stuart commented that the plan also showed only portions of roads that were the most crucial, not necessarily the whole road. TM English stated that each segment on the plan was a half-mile segment. Rick had a question if each of the priorities were 33% in the software package. TM English stated that those were our criteria. All that the software package did was calculate data based on the criteria given. Rick wanted to know what the list was based on. TM English stated that it was the criteria that he and the board agreed to when the plan was first proposed-- traffic counts, current condition of the road and importance to transportation network. Rick stated that there needed to be some rationale between whether importance weighed out against conditions of safety or traffic counts. TM English replied that there are no statistics that are that detailed. In fact, there are no statistics and road work isn't even done using three criteria. TM English liked this plan because it came out of information from UNH, who are the recognized experts in the State. They train all the road agents and provide assistance to various towns with road projects. They are engineers who know what they are doing. Chairman Fortier asked TM English if crack seal and fill should be pulled out of the plan and put into the regular Highway budget and TM English responded that it made sense. Chairman Fortier then asked TM English that since the bond only addressed tar roads, if he had given any thought to a plan to address the gravel roads. TM English responded that there was another proposed study in the budget that would address the gravel roads. TM English commented that there were problems with road width more so with gravel roads than tar roads. There are sections of Lime Kiln Road where trees have grown in and making the road narrow. Another criteria is the lack of material on the gravel roads. They need to have more crushed gravel on them. Another criteria is drainage, which is, by far, the most important. Chairman Fortier stated that the total price on the plan was \$2.24 million, but from 2016 and on for the rest of the 10 years that most of the work is crack seal and fill. TM English stated that that should be the objective. The objective is to correct as much as possible up front and then maintenance at the end. He also stated that there was no way to do \$1.6 million worth of work in one year; it would have to be done in the first few years, then the roads are in a position to just have maintenance each year. Chairman Fortier stated that the estimate for Lily Pond Road did not include a boring so the Board doesn't know what is under the base. TM English stated that it didn't make any difference because that estimate assumed total reconstruction all the way down to 18 inches. Chairman Fortier stated that if the voters go for the bond, the \$1.6 million would be

spread out over 2 years. TM English stated it was much easier to put out more work than to do small jobs. The contractors are getting a much better price by buying in bulk. Chairman Fortier asked TM English if the bond work would take away from the regular work of the Highway Department and TM English stated that it would all be bid out. Tom Friel had a different point of view; he thought that work could be done on Lime Kiln Road at the top of the study and Lily Pond Road, which was at the bottom of the study. Tom asked Darwin Clogston how far Moody Road was from Route 25. Mr. Clogston stated that it was about ½ mile and it was 1½ miles to Haverhill. Chairman Fortier asked Tom what the point was. Tom stated that to go to Route 25C, it was an extra mile or two to travel. Lily Pond Road connects two State roads. Chairman Fortier stated that instead of deciding which parts of the project to do, they needed to decide, as a Board, whether they were going to recommend the bond. He further stated that the Board agreed that it was up to the voters to decide. Rick stated that he wouldn't recommend it if he doesn't know what is within the bond. TM English stated that he had given the Board the need based on the three (3) criteria. He also stated that even if the Board doesn't go with the whole plan, they have something to go by. Rick stated that safety and the condition of the road were very important. If someone is killed because of the condition of the road, they didn't want that. But if it's just basically on traffic count, there could be a fairly good road with a high traffic count. TM English asked how safety would be defined. Rick stated that going downhill, specifically from Moody Road to Route 25, is not safe. TM English responded that it was safe by the speed limit posted. There were a lot of horizontal and vertical curves and as a rule there are no guardrails on Lily Pond Road. He thought that guardrails were most important. Rick asked how TM English would rate Lily Pond to Brushwood Road. TM English responded that Brushwood Road had a lot of horizontal and vertical curves on a better riding surface, but there were more accidents on that road than any other road. TM English stated that anything that was done would be an improvement. Chairman Fortier asked if it was the consensus of the Board to let the public take a stand on the bond or not. Tom Friel asked if they borrowed \$1 million, how much money would the taxpayers be asked to kick in the first year. Chairman Fortier stated that the first year would be nothing. Tom then said what about the second. TM English responded that on the first year that was paid, it would be \$160,000 and that would be 47 cents per \$1,000 on the rate. Chairman Fortier responded that that would be 47 cents for the bond and then another 29 cents for the budget. TM English responded that 29 cents was his figure, but the Advisory Budget Committee's figure was 35 cents and this doesn't take into account what the school rate would be. TM English stated that the more money spent and a better plan makes for better roads. Chairman Fortier asked the Board what figure they were comfortable with for the bond and around a million dollars seemed to be the consensus. Rick was wondering what the priorities of the Town were: the roads, police, recreation, etc. It may come to the point where the Town can't do it all. Robert Roudebush stated that one of the ways to find out those priorities is to let the Townspeople have their say on the bond. TM English commented that people spoke loud and clear that they wanted Recreation for the kids. Rick stated that it was now more for the adults and the preschool children. TM English responded that it started out for the kids, but recently has developed into a multi-generational plan. Chairman Fortier asked the other Board members to think over the weekend about the amount of the bond and it would be discussed again at their regular meeting on Monday, February 9, 2015.

Chairman Fortier then went to the budget and asked how the Board felt about the work done by the Advisory Budget Committee so far. He asked if there were any Board members who felt that the budget needed to be trimmed in any manner. There was some discussion on what the tax rate was for 2014. Rick had concerns about the Fire Department budgets. He is not convinced that the Board is not going to get done what they want to get done with the Fire Inspector. TM English had the prospective candidate's resume for the Board's eyes only. The candidate had been interviewed by TM English and the three Fire Chiefs and the overall feeling of the Chiefs was

that he had enough of the specifications that he ought to be tried. Rick felt that this person would be another employee for the Town of Woodsville. The gentleman has applied for a membership at the Woodsville Fire Department. He is from out of the area and has no history with the Town. Rick stated that it was counterproductive to what they were trying to do. Robert Roudebush stated that the Board had been kicking this around for a few years also. There were some pretty passionate cases made for the Life Safety Inspector from the Board concerning the multi-family units. Chairman Fortier stated that he had reservations also, but Chief Hammond seemed excited about having the third-party Inspector. Rick stated that the candidate did not have any certification from the State of New Hampshire as a Fire Inspector or as a fireman. His resume stated he had minimal qualifications for Fire Inspector. Chairman Fortier asked what papers were used for the second advertisement. TM English stated that the Union Leader, Caledonia Record, and the Valley News. Robert Roudebush asked what voice the Board had in selecting the candidate for Life Safety/Fire Code Inspector and Chairman Fortier told him that the Board had no authority; it was up to the Chiefs. Chairman Fortier read part of the candidate's qualifications: "I exceed minimum standards for professional qualifications for Fire Inspector and planning as set forth by the National Fire Prevention Association. I am familiar with NFPA fire code and NFPA 101 Life Safety Code." It doesn't say he's certified in it, but he is familiar with it. Chairman Fortier also didn't feel comfortable with the close association with the Woodsville Fire Department and it appears on the surface that they have muscled their way in again. He also feels that the Board should take the high road and give the gentleman a chance, maybe a year or two. If the Board doesn't like what they see in the work product or what's going on and no improvement in the reason they started this in the first place, they cut the funding. Lynn asked if anyone had followed up on the gentleman's references and qualifications. TM English stated that he did not. Robert Roudebush asked if the Board could invite this gentleman into a public Board meeting and TM English stated that they could.

Chairman Fortier asked Rick Ladd about trimming the budget. Rick stated that the Board needed to be very careful where the tax rate goes. If they went with the bond, the tax rate would then be \$7.76 and if they live in a Precinct, add onto that. Rick stated that the rate of taxation was only going in one direction, up. Chairman Fortier stated that services have gone up, and food has gone up. Rick stated that the Town is invested in more services and Chairman Fortier stated that they have just maintained programs. Chairman Fortier's personal feelings were that they could cut the Stonecrest culvert project and the \$10,000 Hazardous Waste Day out. Tom Friel stated that if they started cutting small stuff here and there, it would all add up. TM English stated that he had given the Board a whole list of things that they could cut. Robert Roudebush stated that he was not at the Advisory Budget Committee when Chief Charles made his presentation. There were two no votes and the rest of the Committee voted yes for the Police budget. Rick Ladd had concerns about the extra \$4,000 that the Advisory Budget Committee had given to Tri-County CAP because they had actually missed the deadline. Rick would cut the extra \$4,000 for Tri-County CAP and the culvert project also could possibly wait another year. TM English cautioned the Board that there was a perennial stream and if it did fail, the DES would be all over them. AA Lacaillade stated that if the Board takes out the \$45,000 for the culvert and the culvert fails, there would have to be a special Town meeting to appropriate the funds. Lynn Wheeler asked if the Board was going to be spending their Legal expense this year, based on what's been happening. TM English stated that there were things coming to trial this year. Rick asked how much the new Police Officer would cost and Chairman Fortier told him that it would \$60,000 for three-quarters of the year. Lynn Wheeler asked about the numbers for the Robert E. Clifford Memorial Building and was it because salaries and retirement had been reallocated. She also asked if there would be any personnel changes, particularly part-time to full-time. AA Lacaillade stated that there would not be any changes. Robert Roudebush stated that he was leaning toward the \$4,000 cut to Tri-County CAP. Robert also heard, informally, from a few different people

that the consortium of churches that is going to run the food pantry is pretty sure that they are just going to move into the building. TM English stated that if they moved into the building without a lease, he would have them evicted. Darwin Clogston stated that the Board knows how he stands on the Recreation Department, but the Recreation Department actually did look at their budget and cut programs that didn't work. It appeared to him that all the other departments just took their numbers from last year. Lynn Wheeler asked if all the 2014 projections were in and AA Lacaillade stated that she was waiting for the 4th quarter Trust Fund bill as they had a computer glitch. Robert Roudebush stated that Mr. Clogston had shown a remarkable degree of persistence and patience in attending all the meetings that he has attended.

Work session ended at 8:50 PM

Minutes transcribed by Karen Hyde