

TOWN OF DIXFIELD
Selectmen's Meeting

Monday, Sept. 8, 2014
5:30PM, Ludden Library

Board Members Present: Scott Belskis, Dana Whittemore, Malcolm Gill, Norman Mitchell, and Hart Daley.

Administration Present: Town Manager, Carlo Puia

Town Employees Present: Public Works Director Calvin Beaumier, Police Chief Richard Pickett, Fire Chief Scott Dennett, Leo Jolin

Citizens Present: Walter Newman, Terri Mitchell, Grayson Child, Peter Holman, Laura Holman, Gerry Thibodeau, Dan McKay, and Norine Clarke, recorder of minutes.

Non-residents Present: Phil Crowell, MCOPA

Media: Matt Daigle, Sun Journal, WVAC Channel 7

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Belskis called the meeting to order at 5:30pm, and all recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Agenda Adjustments:** Under item 4a, add warrant #25. Under item 4b, add #24 and under 4c, change #24 to #18.
3. **Approval of Minutes of Aug. 18, 2014 Special Meeting Workshop, August 18, 2014, Special Selectmen's Meeting, August 25, 2014 Regular Selectmen's Meeting.**
 - a. Hearing no objections or corrections, Mr. Daley made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Mr. Whittemore seconded the motion. All were in favor.
4. **Approval of Warrants and Payroll**

Hearing no objections, Mr. Whittemore moved to accept the Warrants as presented. Mr. Mitchell seconded and all were in favor.
5. **Public Comment:** TM Puia handed out copies of the Draft only (see attached) rules for public comment which had put together from examples of other towns. The recommended that it should be adopted as an annual Board policy, not just a Chairman's policy.
 - a. Peter Holman asked if the Selectmen planned to show the Town what the financial benefits would be available to the Town if Wind

Turbines were built. The only answer available was that there would be a fee of about \$4000 minimum per turbine for taxes on a total of 8 to 13 mills.

- b. Gerry Thibodeau, the grandmother of Tyla Thibodeau, was present to ask permission to hold the dance which was to be a part of the “Buddy Bench” presentation on Sat. Sept. 13, 2014 in the Town Office Parking Lot. She was told today (Sept. 8) that they would not be allowed to use the school parking lot because of lack of lighting. CEO Beaumier was asked about lighting in the town lot and he said that was adequate but he wondered about noise. Chief Pickett has been working with the group and said they had agreed to close at 9:00 and he would speak to the director of the next door housing unit so they would be aware. He would also arrange for police coverage. The DJ has already been paid \$400. There are 15-20 volunteers to chaperone and set-up and pick-up will be taken care of. TM Puiia said that this falls under the “time is of the essence” category for decision making by the Board and all agreed that this was a one-time permission only. Mr. Daley made a motion to allow the dance on a one-time only basis, Mr. Gill seconded and all were in favor.

6. **Old Business:**

- a. **Wind Energy Facility Ordinance Discussion and Legal Review with Atty. Kristin Collins** (List of Topics for discussion attached)
TM Puiia handed out copies of the fee schedule for permits. Permits for structures of \$50,000 value are \$250 with an additional \$2 added for every additional \$1000 of value. This should not be listed in the Ordinance so that if fees change, the Ordinance does not have to be changed.
Decommissioning fees for 100% of the project should be in place prior to the project being built including the inflation costs listed as p33 section 4. Atty. Collins asked “according to whose estimate”? and Mr. Daley said “theirs”, and they are liable for any additional funds. CEO Beaumier asked if they could be bonded to cover it and have a review every 5 years. This should be added to the Safety review 12.4 and add to the decommissioning section a reference to 12.4. Reviews should come back to the Planning Board or Selectmen’s Board. CEO Beaumier asked who would check this and the answer was an “Independent Consultant”.
Discussion was held about the \$2000 in the account to be replaced as used by the Town for expenses. There was a concern about the amount being too low but it is for \$2000 per turbine. The Attorney will check on this section.
Concerns over the Scenic Resources were discussed and the Attorney said that some changes in this section would require a zoning reference.

In order to have this ready for the November 4 elections, a special meeting of the Selectmen will have to be held next Mon. Sept 15 at 5:30 at the Ludden Library. Still to be covered are the “fall zone” requirements and to check the limits of space between the Turbines and the property lines or the buildings.

It being 8:00, the Board agreed to move on to the next item on the agenda.

- b. **Report by Phil Crowell on the MCOPA’s Comprehensive Study of the Dixfield Police Department** Mr. Daley had a list of items that were on the report that he wanted to double check. Some training was cited as undocumented and some as not done at all. Chief Pickett said that the training had been done but the documentation was not filed so as to be easy to access. Two people were providing information and the Lieutenant was not privy to some of the information. Chief Pickett said that information for each officer is divided into three files by categories that will make it easier to access the information. There was no training for enhancing skills, but for basics only. Only a minimum had been budgeted for training and much of it was done on line which alone is not adequate. Mr. Mitchell noted that Field Training does not meet “best practices” standards. Chief Pickett said that many changes have been made and where field training for a new officer used to be 120 hours, it is now 240 hours riding with another officer. The Lieutenant is working on a new program but having only 5 officers makes it hard to schedule. Some could be reduced by “front-end training” Mr. Daley noted that the questions about a secure evidence room have already been addressed. Chief Crowell said that they had requested a secure room WITH adequate ventilation. Chief Pickett said that their tech person was going to a NH school for the latest methods of securing evidence. Mr. Daley noted that it had been listed as a priority to find a more suitable facility for the department but nothing has been found yet. Chief Crowell said that it needs to have better signage for the public to find it. Mr. Daley asked about the Policies and Procedures Manual. Chief Pickett noted that a former town manager who wanted to be the Police Chief had gone through and changed wording. They are now re-doing the manual along with the officers and unions and it has been put on a flash drive which should be done soon. Mr. Mitchell questioned personal use of cell phones and Chief Pickett responded that they were using the Town’s Personnel Policy currently but it needs to be “tightened up”. In answer to Mr. Mitchell’s question about mutual aid, Chief Pickett responded that it is in place with all area towns. Chief Pickett thanked the MCOPA group for doing a great job and they were happy to find out what they could be doing better. The Dixfield force has changed its logo to include the words “your safety—our mission”.

Mr. Belskis questioned the response to complaints about officers. Right now, the Lieutenant does fact finding and then notifies the complainant. It was agreed that there should be a process listed in the policies and it should be clarified by the type of complaint.

- c. **Request for use of Road Reserves** Director Beaumier thought when they postponed his request that it was until his next monthly report not the next meeting so he was not prepared. He is however, redoing the road record keeping and should have answers on Sept. 22.

TM Puiia offered to recess because of the hour but the Board agreed that they would like to continue.

- d. The Recall Ordinance was tabled till Sept. 22 at which time TM Puiia will have a draft ready. Motion to table by Mr. Whittemore seconded by Mr. Gill, unanimous.

7. **New Business**

a. **Discussion on the anticipated vacancy of the Chief of Police position**

It was agreed that the hiring of a new chief is the first priority. By January there needs to be a 5 man force to satisfy the Grant. Chief Pickett said his earliest retirement date would be mid-January and the latest mid-February. The question asked was whether the Town could post an opening for a spot for which they had no notice of a vacancy. Chief Pickett recommended that the Board contact MCOPA for a hiring committee for the Chief's position. Mr. Belskis made a motion and Mr. Whittemore seconded it to table that discussion to the Sept. 22 meeting. All were in favor.

b. **Review of Board of Appeals Ordinance**

TM Puiia handed out copies of a proposed information sheet to be filled out by citizens looking for board or committee memberships.

8. **Other Business:** TM Puiia handed out copies of a proposed candidate information sheet to be filled out by citizens requesting to be appointed to a Town Board or Committee. TM Puiia noted that the Town currently has 3 tax acquired properties with uncollectable balances on their water accounts. These balances should be abated as they distort the bottom line. A motion was made by Mr. Gill to accept the abatements for the 3 town owned properties due to unpaid water bills. Mr. Daley seconded the motion and all were in favor.

9. **Public Correspondence: Letter from E& E Awards regarding the bid process**

The request was that all should be allowed to bid. Mr. Whittemore explained that by the time the children were signed up, there was only a 2 week window to get the shirts and it had to be done through someone who had the shirts in stock and did in-house work. The policy states a \$2500 min. for bid items. Many of the coaches order their shirts separately and therefore does not meet the minimum.

Performance and quality specifications must be met. TM Puiia said he would respond to the letter.

10. Board Questions/Comments:

Mr. Whittemore asked about the town police departments joining forces. TM Puiia said he had talked to Chief Carter, Sheriff Wayne Gallant and TM John Madigan about this issue and they are well into the Rumford/ Mexico talks. Chief Pickett said the 3 chiefs had been having meetings about sharing big ticket items but it was determined that towns want their own forces and local control.

Mr. Gill reported that negotiations were making some progress and some items should be resolved in a couple of days. He also asked Chair Belskis about the conflict of interest issue with lawyer Kreckel and he said it would be done on Sept. 9, 2014.

Mr. Daley: None

Mr. Mitchell: None

Chair Belskis reported that Grady Littlehale wants to donate the use of a giant pumpkin to the Town for photo opportunities. He will assume care and storage of it. It was suggested that perhaps it could be placed on the Village Green.

Mr. Whittemore added that the sign committee was looking into a sign similar to that at Coulthard's Pools. They would like to request Ione Harlow fund money and get donations for a total cost of about \$15,000. The suggested spot was in front of the Post Office assuming there is space enough. TM Puiia will draft a letter of request for donations.

11. FYI (as noted on agenda)

12. Next Meeting Sept. 15 (extra) Next regular meeting Sept. 22, 2014

13. Adjournment

Mr. Mitchell made a motion to adjourn at 9:18pm. Mr. Daley seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Norine Clarke recorder of minutes
nhc/