

BOARD OF SELECTMEN **November 15, 2010**
PUBLIC MINUTES 7:00 PM
Amended and Approved 11/22/10

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING 11-15-10 (7:00 PM)

Selectmen present: David Petry, Frank Cadwell, Mark Le Doux (by conference call) and Vahrij Manoukian
Absent: Peter Band
Staff present: Troy Brown, Town Administrator; Cathy Hoffman, Assistant Town Administrator; Paul Armstrong, Camera Operator

COMMUNITY ROOM 7:00 PM

Chairman David Petry convened the November 15, 2010 Selectmen's meeting at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Community Room. M. Le Doux participated in the meeting by conference call from California.

The Board voted to enter into a non-public session.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

MOVED by Frank Cadwell seconded by Vahrij Manoukian that the Selectmen enter into a NON-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A: 3-II (b) for the consideration of the hiring of any person as a public employee. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Cadwell, Le Doux and Manoukian. No one was opposed. Band was absent. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

The Board entered into a non-public session at 7:01 PM.

CONCLUSION OF NON-PUBLIC SESSION

MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian, seconded by Frank Cadwell that the Selectmen come out of NON-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A: 3-III. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Cadwell, Le Doux and Manoukian. No one was opposed. Band was absent. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian, seconded by Frank Cadwell that the Selectmen seal the minutes of the NON-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A: 3-III. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Cadwell, Le Doux and Manoukian. No one was opposed. Band was absent. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

The Board came out of non-public session and entered into public session at 7:25 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/AGENDA REVIEW

Selectman Manoukian led the Board and those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

T. Brown reviewed the meeting agenda. He stated that Public Works Director Jeff Babel would be asking the Board to sign the revised Snow and Ice Policy. He would also be presenting the proposed budget for the Souhegan Regional Landfill District. The non-public session scheduled for the end of the meeting has been cancelled.

Chairman Petry informed the public that the Board would be authorizing the hiring of a new police officer to fill an existing vacancy.

MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian, seconded by Mark Le Doux that the Selectmen authorize Police Chief Russell Ux to hire Joseph Wallent to fill the position of Patrol Officer with a start date of November 29, 2010 at a pay rate of Step 2. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Cadwell, Le Doux and Manoukian. No one was opposed. Band was absent. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

52
53 Chief Ux reported that the UEM (Unused/ Expired Medications) Disposal Day held on Saturday
54 November 13th was a success. Forty pounds of expired and unused prescription medications were
55 collected. He credited Selectman and pharmacist Manoukian for his efforts in coordinating the event and
56 for ensuring that proper protocols were followed for the safe and secure disposal of the drugs. Chief Ux
57 added that the misuse of prescription drugs is a serious problem. V. Manoukian stated that the Board of
58 Pharmacy would be coordinating another collection in April of 2011. The goal is to hold this event twice
59 a year.

60
61 **MEETINGS**

62 **1. Arnie McCalmont**

63 **a. Fire Pond Maintenance:** Discussion was tabled to the November 22nd meeting.

64 **2. Paul Clark, Clark and Lavey**

65 **a. Health Insurance Rates:** P. Clark explained why there has been a delay in receiving rates for
66 health insurance. The Town has had a very bad year for medical claims. Administration costs are
67 fine, but because of the large losses, reinsurers have delayed issuing current rates. Because of the
68 loss scenario, the reinsurers' money is "on the hook." The reinsurers are losing over \$70,000. He
69 added that 10% of enrollees in the program are responsible for 90% of the claims. He does expect
70 to receive rates on Monday or Tuesday (November 22nd or 23rd). D. Petry commented that
71 because of the delay the Town cannot change from self-insured or set the budget. There are no
72 options. M. Le Doux asked to see the experience modification reports. P. Clark stated that during
73 2010 there were several one-time events and some chronic health issues. The Town's stop-loss
74 insurance covers claims that exceed the cap of \$35,000 per participant.

75
76 Dental insurance rates will increase 6.5% and life and disability rates will remain flat for 2011. T.
77 Brown noted that if the Town were to consider other products, the decision should be made by
78 December 1st.

79 **3. Jeff Babel, Public Works Director**

80 **a. Snow and Ice Policy:** The Board signed the Snow and Ice Policy that was revised and approved
81 at the November 8th Selectmen's meeting.

82 **b. Souhegan Regional Landfill District (SRLD) Rates:** J. Babel explained that using the current
83 method of apportionment to the member towns, which include Amherst, Brookline, Hollis and
84 Mont Vernon, Hollis's total assessment would be \$234,658.58. He stated that using the new
85 formula for determining the capital assessment, which is based on the trash/recycling tonnage
86 instead of the EAV (Equalized Assessed Valuation of the Town), the Town's apportionment
87 would decrease to \$231,537.62. The percentage decrease would be from 34.09% to 31.36%.
88 Revenue has also increased. The proposal must be reviewed by the Attorney Drescher who
89 represents all of the member towns. The agreement would then be voted on at Town Meeting. If
90 approved the rates would take effect in 2012.

91
92 **ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

93 **1. Weekly Meeting Schedule and Announcements:** F. Cadwell announced the Town board,
94 committee and commission meetings for the week of November 15th through the 19th.

95 **2. Notice of Intent to Cut Timber:** The Board signed the Intent to Cut Wood or Timber for Map/Lot
96 003-030.

97
98 *MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian, seconded by Frank Cadwell that the Selectmen sign the Intent to*
99 *Cut Wood or Timber for Map/Lot 003-030, as presented. Voting in favor of the motion were*
100 *Petry, Cadwell, Le Doux and Manoukian. No one was opposed. Band was absent. The motion*
101 *PASSED 4-0-0.*

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BUDGET WORKSHOP

T. Brown distributed a summary of the status of the proposed 2011 Town budget. He stated that as proposed, the budget is \$51,265 over guidance. Outstanding issues are the health insurance numbers and the library roof replacement, which would cost \$40,000. As discussed during the November 8th meeting, department heads, with the exception of the DPW, were asked to submit a 3% work hour reduction plan. He noted that he did receive a letter from the Library Trustees this morning. The Board agreed to discuss the letter at the next Selectmen's meeting.

Library Trustees: Referring to the letter submitted to the Board, Chairman of the Library Trustees Bob Bartis informed the Selectmen that the Library Trustees resubmitted a revised budget of \$286,477. The previous budget was \$291,000. Now the Board is asking for an additional 3% cut. F. Cadwell explained that the purpose of the exercise was for department heads to decrease, by 3%, items in the budget that are controllable. After discussing the issues, the Board agreed that this would mean work hours.

Vice Chairman of the Trustees Michelle Repp stated that the library is already operating on a "bare bones" budget. She compared the Hollis Social Library operations to twelve other libraries with similar statistics. Hollis operates on 2.652 full-time equivalents. The next closest library operates at 5.65. If the Board is asking for further cuts, it would mean cutting library hours. With a higher usage rate than ever, this is not a viable option. F. Cadwell commented that the Board does not like this exercise either. At this point, it is a discussion. Citing previous discussions regarding budget cuts, F. Cadwell stated that the Public Works Department has been directed to cut snow plow routes from ten to nine. In addition, the planned purchase of a new truck has been removed from the budget, and a vacant full-time position at the DPW is not being filled. It is the Board's responsibility to consider the Budget Committee's guidance. The Board may not agree with this guidance but, we must at least start at the guidance, because the Budget Committee is an elected committee.

B. Bartis pointed out that the Budget Committee's guidance came in after the Trustees had already presented the library budget to the Selectmen. D. Petry agreed that it took the Budget Committee a long time to set guidance. He added that some members of the Budget Committee would have preferred a negative guidance. F. Cadwell commented that this is the third year in a row that department heads have had to submit a budget and then revise it a second time after guidance was set. B. Bartis stated that this exercise in hours, which for the library, would amount to \$2,500 per year, is not worth it. F. Cadwell stated that an overall reduction in hours for all departments would make a difference. M. Repp asked if decreases in the Town Hall work hours would have a daily impact on the citizens of Hollis. F. Cadwell responded "Absolutely." T. Brown has submitted decreases in administration, building, assessing, planning, finance and tax. M. Repp stated that if the library were to shut down, the people would see it and feel it. The library is the one place that the people can come to daily. The library is heavily utilized. If a reduction in hours is the direction the Selectmen are giving, then the Trustees will close for 2-3 hours per week. However, the Trustees' job is to advocate for the library and we do not feel that it is an appropriate decision to reduce the library's hours. D. Petry noted that no decision has been made.

F. Cadwell questioned if closing the library is the only option. He asked about staffing. Library Director Gaye Kurmas stated that the library is required to have two people on staff during open hours. T. Brown asked if some of the financial responsibilities such as payroll could be turned over to the Town. G. Kurmas responded that the Trustees do have a Treasurer and a part-time employee multi-tasks and assists with finances.

D. Petry explained that the Board must go through this process in order to be able to defend any budget decisions that are made. M. Le Doux commented that the Board supports the library. The purpose of the

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153 exercise it to help keep the tax rate as low as possible. As leaders of the Town, the Board must carry out
154 its fiduciary responsibility.
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156 D. Petry asked how many hours the library is open currently. Current operating hours are Monday
157 through Thursday, 10 hours; Friday, 7 hours; Saturday, 6.5 hours; and Sunday, 4 hours. This totals 57.5
158 hours per week. D. Petry questioned if there would be greater usage hours if hours were increased. G.
159 Kurmas responded yes. Demand is on the increase. She added that the library has fixed operating costs.
160

161 F. Cadwell asked about the possibility of decreasing work force hours. He asked the Trustees to look at all
162 options, such as having the Town Hall take over the finances.
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164 V. Manoukian assured the Trustees that the Board was not targeting the library for budget reductions. The
165 State of New Hampshire has cut aid to towns by 5%. All departments have been asked to reduce their
166 budgets by 3%. The Board must look at ways to save money. M. Repp reiterated the Trustees position
167 that they are advocates for the library. F. Cadwell asked the Trustees to find a way to reduce work force
168 hours.

169 **Town Hall:** T. Brown expressed concern that no option was provided by the Trustees on the impact of a
170 3% reduction in work force hours, which was the purpose of the exercise. He reviewed the Town Hall 3%
171 reduction plan. He stated that the Town Clerk and IT departments were not included in the plan. Previous
172 work hour reductions include the Tax Collector from 40 to 35 hours and the Building and Land Use
173 Coordinator from 40-30 hours. He noted that this position is now part-time and does not include benefits,
174 which is an additional cost reduction. Currently, the annual total for all positions is 17,940 hours. A 3%
175 reduction would be 538.2 hours. In addition, there is the potential to reduce one position from 40 to 35
176 hours. Another option is to have employees take one week of unpaid furlough. If all of these options were
177 implemented the total decrease in hours would be 565 hours for a savings of \$16,019.67.
178

179 T. Brown informed the Board that Town Hall employees do not receive overtime or comp time.
180 Employees do not break for lunch and there is no minimum call in time. The only other cuts that could be
181 made would be clerical support for those boards, committees and commissions that meet during the week
182 at night. Currently, support at night meetings is provided to the Selectmen, the Planning and Zoning
183 Boards, the Conservation and Historic District Commissions and the Cemetery Trustees. F. Cadwell
184 commented that for the Historic District Commission, 99% of the work is done in the office. Very little
185 work is needed at the meetings. T. Brown commented that it would not be in the best interests of the
186 Town to not staff these night meetings. Land use boards, in particular, need guidance at these meetings. If
187 these meetings are not staffed there would be a breakdown in communications.

188 **Police Department:** Citing an email sent to the Selectmen, Police Chief Russell Ux stated that his
189 department's hours are fixed and there are no furloughs. Regarding the option of reducing staff, he stated
190 that the goal would be achieved next year through attrition. This reduction would amount to \$29,000. The
191 only non-essential position in the department is the police assistant whose salary is approximately
192 \$23,000. However, if this position were eliminated, a patrol officer would have to pick up these duties at a
193 higher cost per hour. This would mean less time on patrol.

194 **Fire Department:** Fire Chief Rick Towne commented that in order to meet the 3% decrease, each
195 position would have to be cut by 1½ weeks. He stated that staffing is at a minimum now. Further cuts would
196 result in decreased response. There are currently eight full-time and three part-time positions. One shift is
197 not filled. There are three to four staffing day shifts and two staffing the night shifts. He noted that the
198 department has been pro-active in implementing public safety programs. Revenue is also generated by
199 charging for ambulance services.
200

201 M. Le Doux questioned if the Board would be doing the Town a service if this 3% cut were to be
202 implemented. It is an issue of taxes versus service. F. Cadwell stated that the Board owes the voters an
203 explanation. The voters elected the Budget Committee members. D. Petry commented that revenues have

204 decreased while costs have continued to increase. M. Le Doux stated that the Board must make tough
205 decisions. V. Manoukian stated that the taxpayers are telling the Board “no additional taxes.”
206

207 M. Le Doux concluded his participation in the meeting at 8:30 PM
208

209 T. Brown informed the Board that the Hollis Seniors have submitted a request to increase their budget to
210 \$2,500. In addition, the Agricultural Commission is asking for a budget of \$3,000 and the Hollis Energy
211 Committee is requesting \$500. The Selectmen agreed to discuss these budget requests at the next meeting.
212

213 **NEW BUSINESS**

214 **1. Delegation of Deposit Authority:** T. Brown requested that the Board approve and sign the
215 Delegation of Deposit Authority, which authorizes Town Administrator Troy Brown and Assistant
216 Town Administrator Cathy Hoffman to make deposits on behalf of the Town. He explained that RSA
217 41:29 allows the Town Treasurer to delegate this authority to other town officials or employees
218 conditioned upon approval in writing by the Board of Selectmen.
219

220 *MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian, seconded by Frank Cadwell that the Selectmen approve and sign*
221 *the Delegation of Deposit Authority, as presented. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry,*
222 *Cadwell and Manoukian. Le Doux, and Band were absent. No one was opposed. The motion*
223 *PASSED 3-0-0.*
224

225 **2. Approval of Expenditures for Flints Pond Hydro-raking Project:** T. Brown stated that the Board
226 has asked to review and approve all invoices associated with the Flints Pond Hydro-raking Project.
227 He asked the Board to approve an invoice in the amount of \$420 to Hollis Construction for gravel
228 used in the stabilization of the State boat launch and the Town beach lot. The second invoice, in the
229 amount of \$3,965.50, to ChemServe, is for the required testing of the hydro-raked spoils. The spoils
230 must be tested for levels of a number of chemicals, pesticides and metals, including arsenic. Except
231 for the gravel, which was not anticipated, the expenditures were included in the proposal. V.
232 Manoukian questioned the amount paid to ChemServe. He suggested competitively bidding the
233 testing.
234

235 *MOVED by Frank Cadwell, seconded by Vahrij Manoukian that the Selectmen approve the*
236 *expenditures to Hollis Construction and ChemServe, as presented. Voting in favor of the motion*
237 *were Petry, Cadwell and Manoukian. Le Doux, and Band were absent. No one was opposed. The*
238 *motion PASSED 3-0-0.*
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240 **3. Town Administrator’s Report**

241 **a. Town Hall Roofing:** T. Brown noted that the Town Hall roofing project is proceeding. He
242 added that the work is slow, due to the staging.

243 **b. Paul Dogherty:** The Board offered condolences to the Dogherty family. Paul Dogherty
244 passed away on Saturday November 13th. Paul’s daughter in law, Kimberly Dogherty, is the
245 Town’s Administrative Assistant/Human Resources Coordinator. Arrangements are in the
246 care of the Sweeney Memorial Funeral Home in Billerica, Massachusetts. The family has
247 asked that in lieu of flowers contributions may be made to the American Diabetes
248 Association, 330 Congress St. 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02210.

249 **4. Committee Reports:**

250 **a. Nichols Fund Committee:** F.Cadwell questioned when this committee would be meeting.
251

252 **ADJOURNMENT**

253

254 *MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian, seconded by Frank Cadwell that the Selectmen adjourn. Voting in*
255 *favor of the motion were Petry, Cadwell and Manoukian. Le Doux, and Band were absent. No*
256 *one was opposed. The motion PASSED 3-0-0.*

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258 The Board adjourned at 10:11 PM.

259 Respectfully submitted, Cathy Hoffman, Assistant Town Administrator