

Bob \_\_\_\_\_  
 Joanne \_\_\_\_\_  
 Keith \_\_\_\_\_

Draft \_\_\_\_\_  
 Accepted \_\_\_\_\_  
 Accepted as Amended \_\_\_\_\_

**Town of Epsom  
 Board of Selectmen  
 Monday, October 20, 2008**

**Present:** Bob Blodgett, Chairman; Joanne Randall, Vice-Chairman; Keith Cota; Darlene McIntosh, Recording Secretary

**Other Attendees:** Brian Jones, John Weinhold, Cathy Dymont, Frank Mulcahy, Dawn Blackwell, Nancy Wheeler, Barbara Clark, Joni Kitson, State Representative Carole Browne, Betsy Bosiak, Marylou Keane, Gordon Ellis, Dave Fiorentino

**6:15 PM**                    **Bob called the meeting to order and asked Darlene to lead us in the Pledge**

**FOR SIGNATURE**

1. **Accounts Payable**
2. **Payroll**
3. **Manifest**
4. **Updated DMV Agreement** – Keith made a motion to accept the current MAAP User Agreement. Joanne seconded the motion. All in favor.
5. **Petition and License for Buried Cable** – Keith made a motion to authorize the buried cable from 506/2 Old Turnpike Road to be placed no less than 4' underground to lot #U2-7-1. Joanne seconded the motion. All in favor.
6. **Timber Tax Warrant**
7. **Thank you letters**
8. **Eagle Scout Announcement and Congratulatory Letter** – Eagle Scout Michael Verville's Court of Honor will be held on 11/29/08 at 1:00 PM at New Rye Congregational Church. The BOS will write a letter and someone will be present at the ceremony.

Brian Jones approached the board with a request to use the Town Hall for their meetings. He stated he has filled out the application & would like to know how to proceed. Joanne stated the board was still trying to decide whether or not the building will remain in use during the winter months or be closed up & winterized. She asked if he had considered using any of the other town buildings – perhaps the Library. He said he has not officially requested use of the Library. Joanne stated that in her opinion, that room is nicer and warmer. Keith stated that it costs the town about \$5500 to heat that building in the winter and being in a default budget, we need to decide if the town can afford to keep it open during the winter, since the fee for using the room is waived for use by many groups. Joanne suggested that he contact the Library to see if that room is available. Brian said he would do that and would withdraw his application if they no longer wish to use the Town Hall.

**6:30pm**                    Frank Mulcahy & Cathy Dymont from Pre-paid Legal Services. Frank is a certified Risk Management Assessor with Pre-paid Legal Services, Inc. approached the board and stated that he helps protect people against Identity Theft. He said there are new

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laws that Municipalities must abide by whenever they extend credit to people and since the town bills for utilities and water or the School Board and he feels these laws apply to us. He explained that he would train all applicable employees how to protect the town's people against Identity Theft. He said there is no cost to the town for their service; the only commitment is to make employees aware that their services are available at \$0.85/day.

He left some information with the board for review.

Joni Kitson stated that the Town doesn't have anything to do with the Water Department; Keith reiterated that the Water District is a separate function outside the Selectmen's oversight as well as the functions of the School Board. They are independent of the Board of Selectmen.

6:40 pm

### Staff Discussion

**Dawn Blackwell** wants to make sure that we are all ready for the election. She said we will be receiving about 3000 ballots. She said she received two days worth of election training at a recent conference. She stated that we need to be very, very careful this year to be sure that every vote is counted and that there are no errors. She said all Selectmen are expected to be in attendance during the counting. There should also be greeters, and she suggested the Selectmen do that. She said there are 9 tables at the school, and they need at least 4 more tables will be needed. Be prepared for Challengers at the polls.

Parking was discussed. The Town staff will park at the top and the public will park down below. The upper parking lot is not lit at night, so most people will park in the lower lot. Joanne called Dail Transportation to see if they would donate buses & drivers, but was unable to get them to volunteer this.

Bob said he has some Scouts and a few others that have volunteered to help set up, beginning at 3:00 PM the day before voting. He said he has 15 stanchions.

Dawn said there is no longer a box on the ballot for Straight Ticket Voting. She is waiting for signs to arrive from the Secretary of State's office that will advise people of this with the least amount of confusion.

She said the Concord Monitor still points to our old website. And Google is also pointing to the old website. Joanne said she will contact James Bowen about that. Keith said the Epsom Fire Auxiliary has requested to set up a booth on Election Day, and also Virginia Drew from the Meetinghouse group, to sell trinkets in an effort to raise money. Keith referred them to the Moderator, as it is his decision what goes on during Election Day. It is expected that this will be an election like none before and we need to be prepared for record numbers.

**Nancy Wheeler** said the check for Wal-Mart to purchase gift cards (for the tornado victims) is ready to go. Checks written at Wal-Mart are now converted to automatic draft, so an authorized signer must present the check to Wal-Mart in person. She said Harvey contacted her with a question about when the Budget Committee is meeting. She has placed a copy of the schedule in the BOS folder. Budget meetings will be held in the conference room at the Town Office. Keith asked if since Joanne is the liaison to the Budget Committee, must it be posted if other Selectmen would be in attendance. Joanne stated the answer is no, because that other Selectmen would be there as a citizen, not as a representative of the board.

The town has not received an acceptance on the Copson property assessment appeal. The town has also received two more assessment appeals which have been sent to Avitar.

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Joanne said Lee Kimball, who did the NIMS Training on Saturday, announced that he would not be charging the town his usual fee of \$1500 for the class, because he knows the town has been working very hard and is in a default budget. Joanne said she would ask Debbie to send a thank you note to him. The Board recognizes his donation of service in the amount of \$1500.

There is no answer from the LGC on Health Insurance yet.

### Town Department Head Budget Presentation

The following department will be presenting their budget:

**6:50 PM**

#### **Highway Department**

Gordon Ellis reviewed the projects completed in 2008. He said we have not received reimbursement from ½ of the State's and Federal's shares for the work done on Center Hill. On Griffin Road, we have received 100% of the Federal share and 0% of the State's share.

He said he has funding for some projects for 2009, and the town's share of those projects is \$21,500.

His maintenance line is 2/5 of his budget. This line is the one that brings up the most questions.

Keith asked about a line item for \$80K of gravel. Gordon said that is done every year, because it is cheaper to maintain these roads with gravel than to pave them. That will cover about 16 miles of road.

Gordon is recommending to present two of last years warrants including Warrant Article #2 – which is the fourth & final payment on the truck; and Warrant Article # 6 – which is for \$150K for the Capital Reserve Fund for reconstruction and improvements to Town Roads.

Gordon reviewed each line of his budget.

He did not put in for the total Cost of Living increase; he is leaving that up to the Board of Selectmen. Joanne stated if he intends to give his employees a COLA increase, it needs to be included in this budget. The COLA is approximately 6%.

Gordon will keep the increase at 5%.

He plans to buy one load of salt and will screen the sand he has. Keith asked for clarification of what is available in the Capital Reserve Fund. Gordon said it depends on how things end up with Griffin Road because they had to use some of that money for Center Hill Road.

He will be purchasing some new box culverts. Keith asked if traffic will be detoured or if roads will be closed while those new culverts are installed. Gordon said he can detour traffic on all projects except Locke's Hill; he will try to get 2-3 excavators in at one time and complete the job in 24-30 hours. Most other projects will cause detours for 3-4 days.

Keith noted if the town approves the budget and Warrant Articles, they would be approving \$500K for road reconstruction and maintenance. Gordon pointed out that it is a \$145K increase from last year. His total budget is \$714,360K. Joanne stated the final numbers on Gordon's paperwork does not agree with the final numbers on her copy if added manually, so she is going to double-check those numbers to be sure an accurate total is reflected on his proposed budget.

Keith said he expects the Budget Committee will question the items in the Capital Improvement Plan and to be prepared to answer those questions.

Gordon said he & Bob have been working on reviewing the work needed on Cass Road Bridge and hopes in the spring to be able to do some work on it. He also gave an update of Echo Valley which would be reimbursable in 2014.

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Bob asked if Gordon has dropped the load limit on Echo Valley Farm Road. Gordon said no, he needs BOS approval for that. Bob wanted to ensure that would not impede work on Griffin Road Bridge. He said no it will not, because they enter from the other side.

Keith said the State recommends posting the road to E-2, and Gordon wants it to be more restrictive & wants to know why. Gordon said he is being proactive, and is trying to extend the service life of the culvert. Keith's concern is that by being more restrictive, it will affect the residents that live in that area and wonders if it's worth it to make them travel farther to obtain services.

Bob asked if there are any questions from the audience. There are none.

## MINUTES FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- **Draft – October 17, 2008** (Tax Rate Setting Meeting). Joanne made a motion to approve as written. Keith seconded the motion. Keith & Joanne in favor. Bob abstained as he was not in attendance.
- **Draft – October 13, 2008** – Joanne made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Bob seconded the motion. All in favor.
- **Final – October 6, 2008** – Joanne made a motion to accept the final minutes. Bob seconded the motion. All in favor.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY (No action required)

- a. **LCHIP Grant Round 8**
- b. **Griffin Bridge Grant Payment**
- c. **NH DES Authorization U01-24** – This is a notification letter that the Selectmen received from DES to excavate and backfill a property located on Lake Road only as needed as this was an emergency.
- d. **NH DOT Final Reimbursement Request Center Hill Road over Little Suncook River** – Nancy wanted to make sure the Board is aware that this is for the maintenance of the bridge, which was set up last year.

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD

Nancy said there is a hard copy of the UNH water survey in the office for Keith. She has given them the correct contact information of the three current Selectmen.

Nancy also wanted to clarify that the Welfare Committee is still established. Their appointments do not have an end. Joanne said that she has appointment papers Val Long, Don Harty, and Sonia Noyes.

Keith said the former Epsom Building Committee will be meeting tomorrow night to discuss the New Town Office Building Committee, and Town Office needs. He will provide follow up at our next meeting.

Keith said he contacted one property owner at the river avulsion and they want to contact their attorney. He will be providing them some paperwork. He will be in contact with the other primary property owners. This paperwork is required in order to apply for this grant with follow-up letters.

Betsy Bosiak asked what the anticipated property tax rate would be for 2009. Joanne said the board does not set the tax rate as this is the function of DRA and would prefer not to discuss this rate until a final amount is set. Keith noted the board did agree to maintain a fund balance of 8% and to adjust the expected overlays downward to \$20,000 to help reduce the tax impact for the Town's tax rate. The new rate will be forthcoming from DRA.

State Representative Carole Browne said a Deerfield resident asked her what the estimated finish time of Griffin Road Bridge is. Bob advised her that it should be completed before end of the calendar year 2008.

Nancy Wheeler asked Keith to clarify what Virginia Drew wanted to do at elections. Keith said she wants to sell trinkets or fund raffle tickets to benefit the Friends of the Meetinghouse. Since this is a town appointed committee, it might be appropriate to know what exactly is going to be done – how funds will be handled, etc. before the BOS agrees to allow that.

**8:30 PM** Joanne made a motion to adjourn. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.