

Bob _____
Joanne _____
Keith _____

Draft _____
Accepted _____
Accepted as Amended _____

**Town of Epsom
Board of Selectmen
Monday, October 27, 2008**

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

Other Attendees: Andrew Walton, Betsy Bosiak, Joni Kitson, Mary Frambach, Carol McGuire, Alison Parodi, Barbara Clark, Nancy Wheeler, Alan Quimby, State Representative Carole Brown, Glenn Horner, Jay Hickey

6:15pm Bob called the meeting to order and asked Andrew Walton to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

FOR SIGNATURE

1. Accounts Payable
2. Manifest
3. Election Appointment Papers - Inspector of the Elections - Jeanne Foster, Sonia Noyes, Linda Martel and Linda Sawyer. Joanne made a motion to sign these appointment papers. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.
4. Intent to Cut - This is tornado debris being cleaned up on two properties.
5. Land Use Change Tax - Two warrants for collection.
6. 2008 Abatements & Refunds
7. Cook, Kenison, Bedard join Law Firm of Ransmeier & Spellman, PC Choice Letter - Byron Bedard is our "conflict" counsel and he is relocating to the new firm of Ransmeier & Spellman PC. All fees will remain the same. We have the option to sign the acceptance letter and have our records transferred with him, or choose a new attorney. Joanne made a motion to sign the acceptance letter and continue to use Byron Bedard as "conflict counsel". Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.
8. Concord Regional Visiting Nurse - Town Agreement - Total value of services provided to the town of Epsom for 2008 is \$108,888. We owe them \$5000 for these services. This amount has remained the same for several years. Joanne made a motion to pay them the \$5000 for services for 2009. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor. The breakdown of where the money was spent is listed in the town report.
9. Gift Card Letters - Bob said he went to Wal-Mart and got the gift cards. The Selectmen will sign the letters to be included with the gift cards.

6:30pm Staff Discussion
Barbara Clark - asked if anyone has questions about items for signature. No one has questions.
LGC Insurance Rates: Barbara stated the BOS needs to make a decision regarding Flex Plan Spending, and she explained the details of the debit card program, and the additional costs per participant. She also explained that the cost of the plan could drop significantly by modifying the prescription card program. There was a discussion about participating with a multi-year Workers Comp plan with Primex, or going through LGC. Barbara will continue to seek the costs for Workers Comp through both options for review by the Board. There was discussion about whether the Board may want to

change the plan, which will increase prescription costs, but lower the premium cost; and if this would be in the best interest for Town's employees Town's employees. Joanne made a motion to remove C100MC plan from the current benefit renewal package, add flex spending and continue with the rest of the current plan. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.

Barbara said she'll have the new Workers Comp figures & a contract for the Board's: meeting Board's meeting next Monday.

Keith asked how Barb feels about being more involved with the Planning Board and Zoning Board. She thinks it is going very well & is very informative.

Nancy Wheeler stated that Stewart Yeaton wants the Selectmen to hold a public hearing on November 10 so he can present his plans of how to spend the Reid donation. The public hearing has been scheduled for 6:15 PM. Nancy will submit a notice to the Suncook Valley Sun & the Hooksett Banner.

Nancy asked about the new COLA figures. The latest figure is 5.7% for the northeast. Keith feels it's very important that we decide on that amount so that each department who is planning to use a COLA increase will be consistent.

Town Department Head Budget Presentation

- 6:55pm** **Conservation Commission** - Allison Parodi said they are trying to mirror the same budget as last year. She said they spend very little of the money that's in their budget. The Conservation Corps is offering Conservation Teams to work on properties, which brings in 6 laborers and 2 supervisors for 8 hours a day for 20 working days - and they camp on the land while they complete all the designated projects. She said this is a matching grant program, and our portion would cost \$17,000. This would catch the town up on projects for quite a while. She said she has spent a very small amount of her maintenance budget over the past 6 or 7 years, so the money is there. She would like the Selectmen to contribute in the budget \$6000 toward the \$17,000 so some money is left in the department's budget if they need it. She would withdraw the balance of \$11,000 from her fund to pay for this. She recommended increasing Land Management line (690) to \$6,000 and to reduce the Land Acquisitions and Easement line (310) to \$500. The BOS feels this is a worthwhile project, and so has given their approval for the switch in budget lines.
- 7:05pm** **Planning Board** - Alan Quimby, Vice-Chairman of the Planning Board presented the proposed budget, which will be similar to the 2008 budget. Alan answered questions from the board. There is an added amount of \$1700 for Capital Improvement Plan which is required each year. This will be done through CNHRPC. Keith asked if Alan feels the current application fees are adequate & Alan replied yes.
- 7:30pm** **ZBA** - Glenn Horner presented the proposed ZBA budget and stated the increase in the legal fee line is due to the number of cases that end up in court, and he's trying to be proactive by consulting with Tony when questions arise. Keith asked for confirmation that all legal fees are absorbed by the ZBA until a case goes to court, at which time the legal fees then come out of the Board of Selectmen's legal fees. Glenn stated he wants to increase that line so that he has the flexibility to consult with Tony when necessary. Keith asked if Glenn feels that our current application fees are adequate & Glenn replied yes.
- 8:00pm** **Zoning Compliance** - Jay Hickey said the budget has not changed very much. He has put in for a 3.9% COLA, but will go with whatever amount the BOS suggests. He said this has been the busiest year in the past 5 years. Jay said since we have gone to a default budget, he has always under-spent his budget, has volunteered time, has not submitted for all of his mileage and has worked through times he has requested time off. He would like to use some of the salary line funds for the coming year and would like to perhaps add an hour of time for himself, reallocate some funds for the coming year and would like to perhaps add an hour of time form himself.

which he will discuss later, and would like to have some hired assistance. There was a brief discussion about finding the best candidate, and what qualifications would be required.

FOR DISCUSSION

- A. Tax Rate Setting - The final tax rate from the Department of Revenue is \$17.35/\$1000, which is an increase from \$15.14 last year. This amount is broken down as follows:
 Town Rate: \$2.60/\$1000
 Local School Rate: \$10.09/ \$1000
 State School Rate: \$2.15/\$1000
 County Rate: \$2.51/1000

Keith explained that they were able to buy down the Town's rate slightly with some fund balance and also decreased the overlay amount to \$20,000, both which helped to bring down the Town Rate. This new rate includes an 18% increase on the County Rate and a 17% increase to the Local School Rate. Keith added the only portion the Selectmen can affect at the tax rate setting is the Town portion.

Joni Kitson expressed her concern about how people will be able to afford their taxes, and how this increase in taxes might affect getting the Town Budget passed.

Andrew Walton stated that 60%+ of our tax revenue is the school taxes. He suggested that someone prepare a pie chart to bring to the elections so people know where the majority of tax money is being spent (Town vs. School).

Joanne said she is planning to put this information on the website so people will be aware. The BOS does not need to do anything official at this time. Dawn will check the rate to be sure that this amount will be sufficient.

- B. Request for Approval -Calendar Raffle 8th Grade - The 8th grade class at Epsom Central School is requesting permission to have a calendar raffle to raise money for a class trip to Washington DC in April. These raffle tickets will only be sold to adults over 18 years old. There was a unanimous consensus of the BOS to approve this request.

MINUTES FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- . Draft - October 20, 2008 - Joanne made a motion to accept the draft minutes of 10/20/08 as amended. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.
- . Final - October 17, 2008 - Joanne made a motion to accept the final minutes of 10/17/08. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.
- . Final - October 13, 2008 - Joanne made a motion to accept the final minutes Of 10/13/08. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.

CONFIDENTIAL

1. Letter from Attorney Soltani
2. Devine Millimet

Items in the Confidential folder were reviewed by the Selectmen.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY (No action required)

a. NH DOT Center Hill Bridge over Blakes Brook b"
Miscellaneous Folder

ANY OTHER BUSINESS BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD

Joanne said Rick Bilodeau (Emergency Management) had suggested the Selectmen be provided with cell phones for town use. Joanne said her bill is getting expensive and wants the BOS to consider providing a cell phone for each BOS member. There was a brief discussion about cell phone plans, and where it would be included in the budget. It was suggested that if cell phones for all departments were combined in one plan, perhaps it would save the town some money.

Joanne asked Nancy if she added any utility expense to the Meetinghouse budget. Nancy said she has net, and asked Joanne to resend it....

Keith wanted to clarify that the request from Virginia Drew to sell trinkets or raffle tickets during the election to benefit the Epsom Historical Society, not the Friends of the Meetinghouse.

Liaison Reports

Keith said he has spoken to Glenn Horner from the ZBA about a holding a Kingstown Park Relocation Proposal meeting. Keith is the liaison for the ZBA so he will be present for this meeting.

Keith said the Epsom Space Needs Committee has met and has discussed plans for the future. He stated this is an informal committee at this time and welcome more people to join. They are trying to determine what the town's current needs are and future space needs. The members from the prior committee identified three actions for the new Space Needs committee to address. The first action is to review the prior committee's space needs and to evaluate if the current facility can continue to accommodate the town's needs. If not, then to consider if other leased properties are available. The second item is to review the existing Meeting House facility with the cellar and meeting rooms to determine if the current space needs can be accommodated in the structure without any expansion. The third objective would be to evaluate the Meetinghouse facility and determine the best means to expand on it to meet the future town needs. This effort would be expected to be a bonded project or possible contractor build with "lease to own." The members hope to be prepared for presentation of the committee's conclusions in March 2010.: They have scheduled a followup meeting on Tuesday, November 18. Keith noted that the Board will need to re-establish the charter for the new committee and appoint members to serve on it. Keith agreed to revise the charter for the Board's review and acceptance.

Keith reported on the river avulsion. Steve Couture is meeting with Allenstown again tonight, and they are hopeful that Allenstown will agree to be the applicant for the Community Development Block Grant for the matching 10% portion required by FEMA for the project. If they do not, there will be a lesser chance of qualifying for the CDBG Grant since Epsom would have to become the applicant. Allenstown has a better chance of qualifying since their average household income is less than Epsom's, which would work in favor of qualification.

Keith reported that he has made contact with both property owners that are affected by the river change as to their willingness to work with the Town and State. He noted that he has followed up the phone conversation with a letter from the Town that outlines the process and the need for the signature for willingness to exchange property. No firm commitments are needed at this time, only agreement to continue to discuss property exchange.

Keith said that he spoke to Police Chief Wayne Preve regarding the advertisement for one position, and Police Chief Preve is in the process of interviewing 4 candidates. Wayne is also requesting an increase for his employees to be effective 11/29/08. Keith asked that this request be added to the November 3rd agenda for discussions.

Keith noted that he has been contacted by Karen Langley~ a new reporter for Concord Monitor and wants to meet with Keith to get background information about the river avulsion. Joanne & Bob both also received a request from her but feel Keith is the most informed to talk with her.

Bob reported on the Griffin Road Bridge and said it is going slow. Hopefully the project will be done by the end of the year.

He also reported that the sand at the highway department facility has been screened and there is an enormous amount of sand. They will be screening the sand at the Meetinghouse next. They will use the sand that is not able to be screened on for backfill, and it will be stored on Rhodora Drive. Joni Kitson asked why the sand is being stored on Rhodora Drive, since we don't own property there. Bob stated that we do own property there: it is the railroad bed Bob said this is a temporary storage facility only and will be moved later for future projects. Joni asked where on Rhodora Drive & Bob replied on the railroad bed.

Joanne said next week the Library, Welfare & Health Department will present their budget. BCEP will present their budget on November 10. This will also be the last time the Selectmen will be together to review budget changes / questions. Joanne will be presenting the final budget to the Budget Committee on November 13.

Joanne is going to the Annual LGC conference in November for 2 days.

Joanne reported that each week when Darlene sends the minutes from Planning Board, Zoning Board and Selectmen, she reformats them and forwards them to James to be posted on the website. More substantial changes will happen over the next summer when the committee members have more time to work on it.

The Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA) rate for US City is 5.4%, and the rate for the Northeast is 5.7%. Historically the Board of Selectmen has used the rate for Northeast. Keith made a motion to approve the COLA for the 2009 budget to be 5.7%. Joanne seconded the motion. All in favor.

Keith stated that all departments who have indicated a COLA in their budget should be notified that the rate has been set at 5.7%. Gordon Ellis had previously indicated that he wanted his COLA to remain at 5%. The BOS feels that the Highway Department should receive the same COLA as all other departments.

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