

**TOWN OF EPSOM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Monday, November 29, 2010**

Bob _____
Keith _____
Don _____

Final _____
Accepted _____
Accepted as Amended _____

Present: Bob Blodgett; Chairman; Keith Cota, Vice Chairman; Don Harty; Darlene Phelps, Recording Secretary

Also in Attendance: Andrew Walton; Mary Frambach; Dave Fiorentino; Gordon Ellis; Nancy Wheeler; Barbara Clark; Debbie Tibbetts; Dawn Blackwell; Donna Kulacz

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

6:30pm **Staff Discussion:** Debbie Tibbetts is looking for suggestions for the picture to be placed on the cover of the Town Report. Suggestions include a picture of the Meetinghouse, the new traffic light, the new bridge on NH Rte 107. Nancy Wheeler has received the engagement letter from Mason + Rich for compiling financial reports for next year and the MS5 report. There has been a change in the standards and Mason + Rich will no longer be able to provide auditing services for the Town of Epsom and end of the year reporting. There needs to be independence parties doing the preparation of the reports and the auditing of them. They will prepare the end of the year financial reports; will assist Nancy in preparing an RFP for auditing services and evaluating responses for the RFP auditing services. Nancy expects to begin compiling financial statements in March, with auditing to begin in June. She indicated that there are several towns that Mason + Rich will not be providing auditing services due to the independent requirements for end of year reports and auditing. Because many other towns will be seeking auditors, Nancy suggested looking for a new auditor sooner rather than later. Nancy noted that the budget has approximately \$10,000 set aside for auditing services. Mason & Rich will charge \$8,900 for the compilation of end of the year financial reports.

Keith asked Nancy if she is satisfied with the service provided by Mason + Rich and Nancy said yes – they are familiar with Epsom’s books and she feels we should stay with Mason + Rich for at least this first transition year. Barbara noted that because of this change, Nancy will have more responsibility in bookkeeping. Keith noted that because of the additional job functions that she will be doing, perhaps Nancy’s job description and salary should be reviewed at a later date.

Keith made a motion to enter into a one year contract with Mason + Rich, Professional Associates, Certified Public Accountants for compilation of financial statements for the year end December 31, 2010, and compilation reports for standards of accounting reports & review services as defined in their 11/24/10 proposal. Don seconded the motion. All in favor.

Keith asked Dawn Blackwell how Saturday went and Dawn said everything went fine, there were no problems with the motor vehicle registration software that required assistance from the closed State Offices. She said the office was busier than she anticipated. Dawn indicated that the Deliberative Session has been scheduled for February 12, and she noticed that there was discussion about having the town office closed that day and open on a different day. She said the office is typically not busy on irregular days. She said Donna & Debbie are willing to work on February 12. The BOS decided to keep the office open on February 12. Nancy said she has notified department heads of the date for Deliberative Session.

Barbara Clark asked Gordon if he received her note about the posting of roads, and Gordon said yes, she can publish that in the paper.

FOR SIGNATURE

1. **Accounts Payable** has been signed.
2. **Manifests** have been signed.
3. **Payroll** has been signed.
4. **2010 Flexible Benefits Plan:** Keith made a motion to approve the Flexible Benefits Plan as presented by Local Government Center. Don seconded the motion. All in favor.
5. **Appointment Papers:** Keith made a motion to appoint Aaron Vrooman to the Website Committee for a term of 11/22/10 to 11/30/11. Don seconded the motion. All in favor.
6. **Intent to Cut:** Tax Map R01- Lot 13 on 184 Jug City Road – Keith made a motion to approve the notice of Intent to Cut for the above-mentioned lot. Bob seconded the motion.
Discussion: Don asked who applies for the permit. Keith noted that the property owner applies for the permit and when the logging is done, a final report is submitted indicating the actual amount of wood removed so a timber tax can be charged. Being no further discussion, Bob called for a vote. All in favor.
Barbara did note land owner will have to obtain a wetlands crossing permit as well.

FOR DISCUSSION

- A. **Police Detail Policy:** Keith made a motion to approve this policy as presented. Don seconded the motion.
Discussion: None. All in favor.
- B. **NH DOT Bridge Replacement – River Road Over Deer Brook:** Keith asked Gordon if the required Town's share of \$115K will be available for this project in July 2018. The town must indicate that the money has been raised at this time if applying for these state funds. Gordon said at this time we do not have the money to match this State Bridge Aid, and he cannot wait until 2018 to complete the work. He said the money is available to do Echo Valley Road. He'd like to fix Cass Road Bridge, even if it's a temporary patch, for less than \$70K, within the next two years. Keith asked which of these 3 roads has a higher traffic demand. Gordon said Echo Valley & River Road have a similar demand, and by fixing the Cass Road Bridge will increase by about 40 cars per day, which is less traffic than Cass Road Bridge. Bob said one reason for fixing Cass Road Bridge is for a measure of safety in case of another emergency event like the tornado, which closed all 3 ways into Center Hill Road & Mountain Road were closed. Keith noted that the bridge over Griffin Brook is now open which provides alternative emergency access through Deerfield. Gordon said he has applied for FEMA funds for River Road Bridge instead waiting for the State funds. Gordon said the State requires a significant amount of additional engineering & construction work which he estimates would double the cost if done through State Bridge Aid, vs. if he does the work himself. More discussion will follow before work is done on any of these bridges.
Mary asked how much money is in the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund right now – Keith said there is approximately \$88K. Gordon said he thinks he's advised the State that he has that money for a different project.
It was decided that due to the recommendation of the Road Agent, it's the consensus of the BOS to not enter into an agreement with the State of NH for River Road bridge project.
- C. **Bid for Blasting & Crushing at Town Shed:** Gordon said he would like to obtain bids for blasting of ledge at the Town Shed and crushing of the blasted material for town use to be stored at the Town Shed. He said the ledge is all cleaned off and is ready to be blasted. He said his primary reason for doing this is not to generate product, but to

create space for a new town shed to be built at some point in the future. He said that whole area is unusable, so by blasting where the ledge is will make some of the area usable. Don asked if Gordon foresees any problems with blasting near the old dump. Gordon said the face of the blast will be parallel with the dump – not perpendicular, and there's only one area that will need to be matted. He noted that dump was sealed up in 1981 per State specs at that time and as long no digging is done, there should not be any impact to the dump. He pointed out that old dump burned the material and the bump is primarily an ash dump. Keith said a letter sent by the State to the town points out that should blasting disturb the buried waste/ash, the Town would be responsibility to assess the impact and clean up according to current State specs. Keith estimated the cost on a worst case scenario to be over \$1M to clean up if something went wrong. Keith advised that in his opinion the risk is too great to proceed with ledge blasting at this location. Gordon said it is up to the BOS to decide if the risk is worth it – he's just trying to make that property more user-friendly. Gordon also suggested that the BOS should consider locating more appropriate property for a Town Shed. The consensus of the BOS is to not pursue the blasting as it is not worth the risk to the town. Gordon is withdrawing his request for permission to seek bids for blasting & crushing, and he will keep his eyes open for a more appropriate piece of property.

MINUTES FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

- **Draft – November 22, 2010:** Keith made a motion to approve these minutes as amended. Don seconded the motion. All in favor.
- **Final – November 15, 2010:** Keith made a motion to approve these minutes as written. Don seconded the motion. All in favor.
- **Final – November 15, 2010 Non-Public:** Keith made a motion to approve these minutes as written. Don seconded the motion. All in favor.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION (No action required)

- Memo from Dawn Blackwell, Town Clerk / Tax Collector
- **County of Merrimack Budget:** Includes a 3.6% increase to be raised by taxes.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE BOARD

Board Member Liaison Reports:

Bob said that the work being done on New Orchard Road and Range Road is all done. The Road Agent will be grading Locke's Hill, Barton Road, Davis Road, Wheeler Road & Chestnut Pond Road and then be moving toward the center of town.

Bob said the Parks Department is still waiting for the base of the skating rink.

Keith said with the newly elected officials representing the Town of Epsom beginning in January, he feels it would be appropriate to invite them to come to a BOS meeting to discuss with them some of Epsom's priorities (Suncook River stabilization & placing the tax impact on the ballot). He'd recommend the BOS invite them to come in quarterly to discuss what bills are coming up that will impact the Town. The BOS agreed to ask Debbie to request them to come in before the beginning of the New Year. Mary indicated that two of the 4 new Representatives

are out of the country at this time. Keith said he'll ask Debbie to ask them to come in on January 10.

Dave Fiorentino is requesting an extension to the 30 days he was given to submit his application to the ZBA before the fines would be revived. Dave said the letters that he has received from Jay Hickey have not directly answered the questions that Dave has asked him. His 30 days are up in a few days and he doesn't know what the exact issues are, so he and his attorney can prepare the arguments. He said Jay has not given him a basis for his interpretation. Keith said he is not opposed to granting an extension of the stay of the fines, to allow Dave & his attorney to prepare the application. Dave indicated that he needs just a couple more weeks.

Keith made a motion to delay the fines until Friday, January 14, 2011 with the understanding that an application for appeal will be filed prior to that time with the ZBA. Don seconded the motion. All in favor.

Andrew Walton asked if any estimates have been received to date for the Meetinghouse. The BOS replied no and there will be discussion on December 30 about that, and a Budget Committee Public Hearing will be held on January 13.

8:00 PM Don made a motion to adjourn. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.