

Bob _____
Joanne _____
Keith _____

Final _____
Accepted _____
Accepted as Amended _____

**TOWN OF EPSOM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Monday, January 12, 2009**

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

Not Present: Joanne Randall, Vice-Chairman

Also in Attendance: Dave Fiorentino; Andrew Walton; Stewart Yeaton; Nick Bassett; Gordon Ellis; Betsy Bosiak; Nancy Wheeler; Barbara Clark, Debbie Tibbetts; Joni Kitson; George Carlson

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

Chief Stewart Yeaton introduced Nick Bassett as the new firefighter for the town. Nick is from Northwood and has completed Firefighter 1 & 2, and EMT Basic Training. He has a degree in Fire Science and has been with Northwood Fire Dept. for 4 years. Chief Yeaton is very pleased to have him on staff. Bob & Keith welcomed Nick as a new employee.

6:20 PM **Meetinghouse Committee** – George Carlson is here as a representative of the Meetinghouse Committee. Keith explained that there are some questions about the State Stewardship Agreement and wondered if George can explain what the Meetinghouse Committee's understanding is of the Stewardship Agreement. George said from what he has seen, it's a pretty standard agreement. He also said they have to form a Stewardship Committee, which is a requirement of the LCHIP grant. Keith said he has spoken with Amy regarding the LCHIP, and has offered some alternative language for the Agreement. It is the understanding that there are no restrictions on renovations to the inside of the building – just the outside. Keith asked George to put together a list of people who will be recommended to the Stewardship Committee so the paperwork can be completed for their official appointments to that committee. There was a brief discussion about the Plan NH Share It Committee that was discussed last week and was forwarded to the Meetinghouse Committee. George explained there is a \$2500 Application Fee, so it was decided we will not act on that at this time.

6:40 PM **Staff Discussion** – Debbie said a Selectman's Report must be written for the Town Report, and she needs no later than January 20th. Keith will ask Joanne if she would like to write that report, as she did it last year. She provided before and after pictures of the Griffin Road Bridge, which could be used for the cover of the Town Report. She called the printer and asked for a price to print the cover in color, as opposed to black & white.

Barb said it's time to renew the virus protection for the computers in the office. She has prepared a Purchase Order for AVG virus protection, which needs to be signed. Because this is an internet download, it requires a credit card to pay for the program, and the Town no longer has a Town Office credit card. One year is \$159, two years is \$239.

Barb said that at the last Budget Committee meeting, some residents were there questioning how Avitar did their assessments. Barb explained that in 2005, the mobile homes on Oak Ridge Drive were assessed as if they are in mobile home parks, which includes a 50% depreciation for being in a mobile home park. In 2008 a Statistical Update was done and it was discovered that the Oak Ridge subdivision was assessed in error, and the correction was made. All property owners received a letter – with a date & time available for homeowners to come in for review and to request a hearing to discuss the reassessment of property values. Avitar had meetings for one week – no owners from the Oak Ridge Drive subdivision came in for a hearing. Some people came into Town Office previously and Barb had explained the situation to them. Going to the Budget Committee meeting was not an appropriate avenue to voice these concerns. Andrew Walton suggested that the BOS look at the Performance section of our contract with Avitar, as those properties were taxed incorrectly for three years.

Keith said that he & Barb still need to work on the 155E regulations. Barb said she has a condensed version, since we can eliminate a portion of the standard regulations.

Nancy said there are two AP folders this week - one has the remaining 2008 invoices. She provided the BOS with a final print out of the budget expenditures. There is \$80K left over from the 2008 budget. There was a lengthy discussion with Gordon Ellis regarding his request for \$27K of that \$80K for gravel. Keith made a motion to accept the encumbrances of the 2008 budget as shown on a memorandum dated 1/12/09 with the exception of the River Road paving project. Bob seconded the motion. All in favor. The end balance of the 2008 budget is \$53,103.14.

Nancy would like the BOS to address the parking lot and sidewalk maintenance at the Town Office when it snows. The parking lot is getting smaller – and the walkway from the upper lot to the lower lot is not cleared, so the office staff has to walk all the way around and it's slippery, and often not completely cleared. Now that there is a metal roof, when the snow falls off the roof it falls in front of the building and blocks parking spaces. Nancy said Jay did some shoveling this morning.

Betsy also indicated that in the past, when she was Planning Board Chairman, she shoveled many times in preparation for the meeting. Our rental agreement with Larry Caraway states that we are responsible for plowing the driveway. Betsy also mentioned that the rear doors are not shoveled either, and if there is an emergency, the rear door exits cannot be used. Gordon said this is the first year that he hasn't kept up with the parking lot clearing at the Town Offices. Bob said he'll talk with Larry Caraway about these issues.

For Signature

1. **Accounts Payable** has been processed.
2. **Manifest** has been signed.
3. **Payroll** has been signed.
4. **Confidential Papers** have been signed.
5. **NH Retirement** has been processed.
6. **Pay Rate Sheet** has been signed.
7. **All Unpaid Receivables (Taxes) for 2008** has been signed.

For Discussion

- A. **Default Budget** - Keith and Bob reviewed the latest Draft Default Budget Worksheet prepared by Nancy. Keith stated that the Budget Committee is supporting a 0% COLA, but he does not agree with that. There was discussion about whether or not Town employees should receive a COLA. Andrew Walton stated he has been to all budget meetings this year and he feels the budget will not be supported by the townspeople with these raises. Some people are upset about the stipends. Joni Kitson feels that the COLA should be adjusted, considering the state of the economy. Betsy asked if all employees will get the COLA, or just the full time employees. Keith noted that the BOS will take everyone's comments into consideration, and both Keith and Bob feel that Joanne should be present for this discussion so it will be moved to the 1/20/09 meeting.
- B. **2008 Encumbrances** – (notes above in Staff Discussion.)
- C. **Mandatory Meeting Regarding FEMA** - Gordon will attend this meeting on Thursday, January 15 at 1:00 PM at the Police Academy.

Minutes For Review and Discussion

- **Draft – January 5, 2009** – Keith made a motion to accept the draft minutes of 1/5/09 as amended. Bob seconded the motion. All in favor.
- **Final – December 29, 2009** – Bob made a motion to accept the final minutes of 12/29/08. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.
- **Final – Non-Public – December 22, 2008** – Bob made a motion to accept the final minutes of Non-Public meeting of 12/22/08. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.

For Your Information Only (No Action Required.)

- a. **Water Street v. Town – Notice of Decision Order on Pending Motions (13 & 17)**
- b. **Water Street v. Town – Motion for Late Entry Granted**
- c. **Water Street v. Town – Court Copies**
- d. **Water Street v. Town – Date for Hearing on Merits** – The Judge will hear this case on 2/11/09.
- e. **Letter from resident** – A letter has been received from a resident with gratitude for the Town's food pantry and also praising Lee Bartlett as Welfare Officer for being kind and caring.
- f. **Fire Department / EMT**

- g. NH OEP – Webster Park Lane** – A letter was received from OEP stating that a call was received by a resident on Webster Park Lane stating that someone is dumping fill on that road. Keith said this is urgent and must be a priority for Jay to address. If there are violations, a cease and desist should be issued.
- h. US Dept. of Commerce – Census**
- i. 2009 Labor Law Training – Barbara and Nancy will be attending this training on January 27, 2009.**

ANY OTHER BUSINESS BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD.

Keith reported that the Police Department has an offer to a new officer to start on February 9. The prospective employee is a guard at the Battle Street Jail in Manchester. Another candidate may be offered a job to start in April, and both employees would be starting the Police Academy in April.

He said the PD Explorer had some mechanical work done under warranty, the 2007 vehicle needed some repair not covered under warranty and the 2006 vehicle needs some minor repair which the Chief may be able to complete himself.

The Police Dept. is updating some computers and has been able to pass along some of his old equipment to other departments. The Police Chief noted that Alan Quimby stated that if there are any other PC's available, the Forest Fire Wardens Office can use them.

Keith spoke to a reporter at the Hooksett Banner about publishing some informational material for the benefit of the voters of Epsom. She indicated that if we provide her with some information, she will consider publishing it.

Joni Kitson asked if she could ask a few questions since she hasn't been at the past several meetings. She asked for an explanation of how the Office Staff stipends came about – and an explanation was given. She feels the BOS made a big oversight by not giving a stipend to the Road Agent as well.

Andrew Walton thinks it would be beneficial to break out the legal expenses for the benefit of the taxpayers – showing what amount was generated by the Planning Board, the Zoning Board, and general Town legal issues.

9:00 PM Bob made a motion to adjourn. Keith seconded the motion. All in favor.