

\_\_\_Bob  
\_\_\_Joanne  
\_\_\_Keith  
\_\_\_Betsy

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

TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

AUGUST 18, 2008

Present: Bob Blodgett, Chairman; Joanne Randall, Vice-Chairman; Keith Cota

Other Attendees: Andrew Walton; Joni Kitson; Mary Frambach; Barbara Clark; Gary Roberge; Loren Martin; Lee Margosian; Nancy Wheeler; Cheryl Arvanitis; Dawn Blackwell; Deb Tibbetts; Cec Curran; Wayne Preve; Dick Frambach; Gordon Ellis; Stewart Yeaton; Herb Bartlett; Glenn Horner

Bob opened the meeting at 5:32 PM, and invited Joni Kitson to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**FOR SIGNATURE**

- 1. Accounts Payable**
- 2. Manifest**
- 3. LUCT (Refer to letter from GSD Properties, LLC)**  
(See discussion following)
- 4. Exemption (2)**
- 6. Request for Leave**
- 7. Revised Pay rate**
- 8. Request for Bid Proposal for Heating Oil**

Bob noted for the record that the application fee for HER & W had been paid when the application was received in the office.

Joni Kitson asked if the donations received and accepted could be used by the Fire Department and Rescue Squad for money spent due to the tornado. Nancy Wheeler indicated it was up to the Board of Selectmen.

**FOR SIGNATURE**

- 5. Conservation License Plate Grant**  
**Keith made a motion to authorize the Board of Selectmen Chairman to sign the License Plate Grant for the Epsom Historic Meeting House stained glass repairs with Bob seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

**RSA 91-A:3 II (c) – Reputation**

Bob noted the non-public session would be postponed temporarily to see if Joanne would be present later.

**FOR DISCUSSION**

**B. Petition from Echo Hill Farm**

A petition was sent to Governor Lynch regarding the washout on Griffin Road at Griffin brook in Epsom by residents of Deerfield. Keith reviewed the petition which had 72 signatures. Keith noted at the last meeting the Board had signed a contract for receiving the bids for the project of replacing the bridge over Griffin Brook. Keith felt the Board has been doing due diligence by taking action to replace the bridge. He hopes the confidence in the Town of Epsom is restored.

Joni Kitson suggested a letter to Governor Lynch letting the Governor know the progress and that the Town is in the process of accepting bids for the project. Mary Frambach asked the number of Epsom residents affected by the bridge. Andrew Walton noted two Epsom residents were affected. Mary suggested letting the Governor know the petition was signed by Deerfield residents.

Keith noted it was a lot of money to replace a bridge considering the small amount of use by Epsom residents.

**Loren Martin – Avitar Associates of New England**

Also present was Gary Roberge of Avitar.

Loren Martin noted Avitar has a copy of Gary DePalma's letter, discussing the land use tax change based on the information she had.

Keith noted that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre was out of current use with the remaining 3.5 acres being in current use. Loren Martin felt in her opinion at the time she was asked for an estimate of the tax it would be \$25,000.00 to \$30,000.00 based on the information she had. Gary DePalma did not like her figures and spoke with Gary Roberge. Mr. Roberge noted he told Mr. DePalma it was only an estimate, Mr. DePalma felt the tax should be \$15,000.00. Mr. Roberge told Mr. DePalma the tax would be determined at the time of the sale.

Keith noted the tax was based on an assessment value of \$315,000.00, asking if this was a problem.

Joanne arrived at 6:09 P.M.

Mr. Roberge discussed how the values were determined and that the current use tax change is based upon the value at the time the actual sale occurs.

Barbara Clark indicated they only needed the Board to sign #3 under 'For Signature'.

Issues with the revaluation and market values were discussed. Barbara noted 25% of the properties were revalued, explaining the update for the town's figures to avoid spiking. Ms. Martin noted the commercial properties on Route 4 had increased in value, mobile homes, particularly 1978 and older had dropped in value. Newer homes were undervalued and previous current use properties have been brought into line. Land values are staying the same with building values being reduced. Barbara noted Avitar would be in the office on Monday to do hearings for the new values set.

Mr. Roberge felt market values would continue to drop. Keith noted it would even out as values are dropping but the tax rate increases.

## **FOR DISCUSSION**

### **C. Letter from Resident – 7 Old Richie Road**

Bob reviewed a letter from Robert White requesting the town reimburse him for materials for removing trees from the tornado. Bob noted he had visited the site with Gordon Ellis; there were no trees on Mr. White's property except his own. Mr. White had cut trees on the town right of way and requested reimbursement for clearing those trees. Bob felt Mr. White should not be reimbursed for this as he did the work on his own. Bob noted the Road Agent did not have a discussion with Mr. White requesting he complete the work.

Keith noted they had to determine if Richie Road was a fee access or easement highway. If it is an easement highway the town has the rights to remove the tree with the owner's permission. He noted Mr. White could have sold the wood. Keith noted no one gave Mr. White permission so he should not be reimbursed. Keith felt the Board should respond with a letter indicating the town is unable to reimburse him for the expenses.

### **D. Meeting Schedule for September (1<sup>st</sup> Monday is Labor Day)**

Joanne noted the board had previously discussed they would be meeting on Tuesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, with a consensus this was agreed to.

## **DISCUSSION – FOLLOW-UP**

### **1. Code of Ethics**

Keith has not had a chance to complete the review, requesting to postpone this item.

**Joanne made a motion to allow Barbara Clark to represent Epsom at the New Hampshire Municipal Association Legislative Conference with Keith seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **PUBLIC HEARING TO ACCEPT GIFTS, GRANTS AND DONATIONS**

**Joanne made a motion the meeting go into a public hearing at 6:40 P.M. for accepting 2008 Contributions, Donations and Grants received since January 1, 2008 with Keith seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

Bob reviewed the list of contributions, grants and donations. Keith noted the contributions over \$5,000.00 require a public hearing with those under \$5,000.00 need to be recognized at a Board meeting. The Board is allowed to accept the contributions per a previous town vote. The Reid donation to the Fire Department, the Department has to return at another public hearing to expend the funds.

#### **STAFF DISCUSSION**

Nancy Wheeler noted Andy Labrie from the Community Action Program had information as to what is available to people affected by the tornado and storm damage. He left applications at the town office. Mr. Labrie also left for \$25.00 Wal-Mart gifts cards that Nancy is holding until the Board decides how to expend them. Keith asked the number of damaged homes, Nancy did not know if it was 9 or 11. Keith asked the number of seasonal homes; Nancy said one was definitely year round. Nancy will be on vacation tomorrow, she will have the AP checks ready for signatures. Barbara will do the payroll for August 29<sup>th</sup>, but no AP's will be done that week. She asked if the Board was meeting on August 25<sup>th</sup>, Joanne said no regular meeting was scheduled. Nancy verified she will let Barbara know that.

Nancy had the oil bid ad in the Board's packets; Barbara could put the ads in the papers.

Deb Tibbetts noted **r (FAX to Northwood and Deerfield)** under FYI, she has faxed the information to Northwood and Deerfield, she has not heard from Barnstead. Deerfield also has excess items. Deb talked to Lee Bartlett, Welfare Officer, who can only accept food items.

Keith asked if Deerfield indicated the direction they were going in with the excess items. Deb noted their top choice was the Salvation Army in Manchester, they

also discussed the Community Action Program and \_\_\_\_\_ Blessings in Portsmouth.

Bob asked how the town could turn over the donated clothing to other organizations. There was discussion as to who could accept clothing and what could be done with it.

## **DEPARTMENT HEAD**

### **Dawn Blackwell – Town Clerk/Tax Collector**

Dawn Blackwell noted the office should be using the new printers and registrations from Motor Vehicle by mid September. Dawn had budget concerns as the ballots are costing more than budgeted for. There is one more election, that line will be overspent. There is only \$75.43 remaining in that line for the general election ballots, Dawn felt they would cost \$800.00 to \$900.00.

### **Lee Bartlett – Welfare Officer**

Lee has not had many people requesting assistance. There have been many inquires about electric and oil for this winter. Lee has posted a new food list she could use for the food pantry and items she does not need. The Community Action Program requested the welfare guidelines; they want to coordinate with surrounding towns.

Joanne reviewed the Welfare Department budget and lines where funds typically are not used. She was concerned with what could happen in the next few months. Keith asked if Lee had any idea on heat and oil projection requests as the line is overspent, Joanne had no idea.

Joanne noted NIMS training was scheduled for October 18<sup>th</sup> for town officials and other designated persons chosen by Department Heads.

### **Cec Curran – Health Officer**

Cec thanked the board for reappointing him as Health Officer. The State is no longer analyzing birds for West Nile and EEE. Cec requested people still read and utilize the information he places in the office. Cec noted his mileage line would be overspent in his budget. All the food service locations have been inspected. He tries to do his work by telephone and e-mail if possible.

### **Cheryl Arvanitis – Library Trustee**

Cheryl Arvanitis noted the Library had a successful summer with many children's programs. The State Library has asked why Epsom has had the significant jump in usage. The budget is tight. Joanne asked if there was a charge for using the meeting room. Cheryl said no, but it is only used by non-profit organizations. Keith asked if they expected to be within their budget, Cheryl felt it would be close, but yes.

### **Gary Perry – Parks & Recreation Department**

Gary noted the new pavilion was ready for use. He has a purchase order for the floats to mark off the swimming area. Gary questioned if this should be done this year or wait until spring. With the rains and high water the area would be closed.

There was a Board consensus to leave the area closed until spring. Gary hopes to complete the dredging this fall.

Chief Yeaton asked about the e-coli. The Fire Department uses the river for training, asking if there were other areas they could use. There was a consensus they could use the swimming area for training as the e-coli counts are down.

Gary will change the signs to the swimming area just being closed.

**Glenn Horner – Zoning Board of Adjustment**

Glenn noted the cases scheduled for Wednesday and another one coming up. The budget is on track, he may be able to return some money to the town.

On another note Glenn noted he had been with a Northwood Selectman who recognized the services of the Fire and Police Chiefs of Epsom as phenomenal.

**Planning Board**

Keith noted many of the Planning Board budget lines may have reserve funds and applications are down and also spending.

Chief Yeaton noted he did a letter for the Planning Board for a cistern for the Harris subdivision. A resident contacted him asking for a copy of the letter, he referred the resident to the Planning Board. Keith had also spoken with the resident who was concerned as to why the developer was not paying 100% of the cistern cost.

**Gordon Ellis – Highway Department**

Gordon discussed his budget, noting he would be using \$10,000.00 from his Highway and Street Maintenance line to pay sub contractors for snow removal from October to December. He would also like to use \$25,000.00 from that line to purchase additional salt and sand. Gordon has approximately \$92,000.00 in the line. With the transfers he would have \$52,000.00 to finish the road maintenance for the year. He would be using approximately \$40,000.00 to grade roads.

The money on his Architect and Engineering Lines is mostly for Center Hill Road and Griffin Road and other engineering on the other 4 projects he would complete if he has money. Gordon will make his budget work.

There is a meeting tomorrow at HTA for Griffin road bids that are due to be opened August 28<sup>th</sup> at the HTA office.

Center Hill Road will be open August 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup>. It will be open sporadically from now until then.

Gordon noted the Selectmen have a responsibility for fueling the town buildings. He felt they need to send a bill to every Congressman and Senator for the cost overtures for fuel. Joanne felt they could send an e-mail for what the lines were budgeted for and what the town is spending. Keith understood the point, in his opinion SB2 should be allowed to adjust in a default budget for these items.

Keith asked how the Highway building is heated, Gordon noted with propane. Joni Kitson asked if there was road damage from the tornado. Gordon noted the ditches were washed out on Echo valley Road (costing approximately \$9,000.00 to repair) and Chestnut Pond Road (\$3,000.00 to \$4,000.00 to repair).

Joanne noted Merrimack County did not receive FEMA funding as most of the homes damaged were secondary residents. Chief Yeaton noted he gave them information that the roads were private roads. Chief Yeaton noted Merrimack County hasn't been told no, he is continuing to tract the money spent.

**Stewart Yeaton – Fire Department**

Chief Yeaton discussed the recent events the Fire Department has responded to – the tornado, a fire at Cumberland Farms, river rescue, motorcycle fatality. He also noted the Department has had multiple calls for bee stings.

Chief Yeaton has donated excess water donated to the Department for the Police Funeral tomorrow.

Chief Yeaton noted the Fire and rescue Association received a \$5,000.00 donation. He is requesting to move \$2,500 to his fuel line from his equipment line. The donation would be used to purchase equipment.

Chief Yeaton noted 22 departments responded to the tornado with 16 departments responding to the barn fire.

Chief Yeaton noted the board had received a letter requesting they remove him as Chief. He is not sure if the person is a resident. Joanne noted she sent a letter asking if the person is a resident. She thanked them for their letter and expressing their concerns. She invited the person to attend a board of Selectmen's meeting.

Chief Yeaton has concerns with some lines in his budget. Chief Yeaton will request a public hearing be scheduled once the Association purchases and donates the equipment. Chief Yeaton noted there is a leak in the roof of the station; he will do a Warrant Article for March to repair it.

Keith asked if Chief Yeaton has tallied the tornado costs. Chief Yeaton said the Department spent \$900.00 in fuel and overtime costs. The building fire cost \$490.00 in fuel costs.

**Wayne Preve – Police Department**

Chief Preve noted the Police Department had responded to the events discussed by Chief Yeaton. They are also investigating a thief at McDonald's. He noted other ongoing and completed investigations. The new officer has passed the PT test but can't go to the Police Academy until January. He will not be on board full time until April or May. The second spot can't be filled as the candidate would not be able to attend the Police Academy. Chief Preve received a notice

from the Merrimack County Attorney's Office that the fees are increasing \$1,800.00 next year.

Chief Preve asked about the cruisers they were selling. Joanne noted Central Auto Parts felt the town would get a better deal for the 2005 cruiser at auction. They will take the 2004 cruiser for \$1,000.00.

Keith noted the dispatch committee met with the Allenstown chief having pulled costs together. It seems Merrimack County Sheriff's Dispatch is the best alternative for costs. Chief Preve is concerned they haven't received the projected costs from Bow for next year's budget.

Chief Preve noted for the budget they will be over on the gas line. The over time line is high. He is using the salary line to cover over costs on the lines. New uniforms are needed for the new officer. Keith noted the Department has funds in some lines to offset other increases. Keith was concerned with the stress being put on the officers with the overtime. Keith has also discussed with Chief Preve a salary structure to bring forward to the town next year.

Joanne noted swimming lessons were cancelled and that \$2,300.00 was available.

Joni thanked the Department Heads for their hard work.

Gordon gave the Board an invoice from Chadwick-BaRoss for damage on the backhoe when it was returned. Gordon felt the invoice should not be paid and has communicated this to them. Keith reviewed the information and Chadwick-Baross's response to Gordon's reply. He felt Gordon should respond the Highway Department has the same position and they could appeal to the board of Selectmen.

#### **RETURN TO PUBLIC HEARING**

Bob asked if there was any further discussion regarding the acceptance of the 2008 contributions, Donations and Grants received since January 1, 2008. There was not further discussion.

**Joanne made a motion to close the public hearing with Keith seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Joanne made a motion to accept the 2008 Contributions, donations and grants received since January 1, 2008 with Keith seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Joanne made a motion to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II(c) for reputation with Keith seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed with Bob, Joanne and Keith voting yes.**

The board went into non-public session at 8:40 P.M. returning at 8:45 P.M.

**Joanne made a motion to unseal the non-public minutes of July 29, 2008 as redacted with Keith seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Joanne made a motion to unseal the non-public minutes of August 6, 2008 as redacted with Keith seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Joanne made a motion to seal the minutes of the emergency telephone meeting of August 15, 2008 with Keith seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **MINUTES FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

##### **Final Minutes of July 23, 2008**

**Joanne made a motion to approve the final minutes of July 23, 2008 with Keith seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

Joanne left the meeting at 9:18 P.M.

##### **Draft Minutes of July 28, 2008**

The draft minutes of July 28, 2008 were reviewed and amended.

**Keith made a motion to accept the draft minutes of July 28, 2008 as amended with Bob seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously**

**Draft Minutes of August 4, 2008**

The draft minutes of August 4, 2008 were reviewed and amended.

**Keith made a motion to accept the draft minutes of August 4, 2008 as amended with Bob seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously**

Keith noted there was a meeting on Thursday with the Library Trustees and respective attorneys regarding the Historical Association using the old library building.

Items from the “For Your Information Only” list were reviewed.

**DISCUSSION FOLLOW-UP**

**2. Mr. Nutter Letter/Pictures**

**2a. Adam Towne Letter**

Keith noted the letter from Mr. Nutter that indicated Mr. Nutter felt there was damage to his property from the Center Hill Road Project. Keith also had a letter from Adam Towne with his understanding of the events. According to the Road Agent DBU did not destroy the stone wall, as that was done in May 2007. Mr. Nutter could request the town install a drive pipe for the drive. Keith noted the Road Agent, not DBU, installed the replacement wall.

Bob has discussed the letter with the Road Agent. Keith suggested putting the item on the agenda then having the Road Agent come in to discuss. A response could then be drafted. Mr. Towne noted in his letter many of the decisions were under the direction of the Road Agent.

**Keith made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Bob seconding the motion.**

**Bob asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Bob asked for a vote. The motion passed unanimously**

Bob adjourned the meeting at 9:52 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Bosiak  
Recording Secretary