

TOWN OF EPSOM  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 2, 2008

Present: Bob Blodgett, Chairman; Joanne Randall, Vice-Chairman; Keith Cota (arriving at 6:21 P.M.)

Other Attendees: Joni Kitson; Andrew Walton; Nancy Wheeler; Daniel P. Ward, Sr.; Ronald R. White; Bronwyn Asplund-Walsh; Richard G. Doucet; Carole Brown; Russell Bartlett; Joe Wichert; Sean James

Bob opened the meeting at 6:17 P.M., and invited Betsy Bosiak to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**FOR SIGNATURE**

- 1. Accounts Payable**
- 2. Manifest**
- 3. Exemption**
- 4. Timber Yield Taxes**
- 5. NH Association of Assessing Officials**

Joanne reviewed the ballot noting one person was listed for each position.

**Joanne made a motion the Board accept all candidates for the Board of Assessing as their official ballot with Keith 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.**

- 6. NH Retirement – Position Certification Form**
- 7. Request for Leave**

**Code of Ethics**

Keith noted this item was to be postponed until September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Staff Discussion**

Nancy Wheeler was the only staff member present. Nancy noted the MS4 was submitted to DRA last week.

Nancy attended the Homeland Security Emergency Meeting briefing at the Fire Department today. The Town of Epsom has filed its intent to apply. Nancy is working with the Departments to collect the information required for reimbursement of costs for the tornado.

Nancy noted the Fire Chief discussed with a FEMA representative the trees that needed to be removed on the Class 6 portion of Old Town Road as the road is impassable. FEMA is to review the request to assist with the costs of removing the trees.

Joanne has spoken with Debbie Tibbetts about the clothing donated to the town. Debbie has heard from Barnstead and forwarded the information to them. Barnstead is the only town to respond, once the town hears from them the board can make a decision as to what to do with the clothes.

Nancy Wheeler asked the status of the money received by the town. She had received a telephone call from a Northwood resident who wanted to donate money. Nancy did mention to the person that the Lions Club was distributing money on Saturday. Joanne noted the board has not made a decision. Keith noted the Board was to find out the number of permanent vs. seasonal residents. He felt they should give portional gift cards to Home Depot. Nancy thought they should have this information by Monday. Nancy noted giving gift cards would be easier for her.

Keith felt until they determine the number of units the town should take all donations. Nancy noted the town is a municipality, not a chartable organization. Deerfield is looking to set up a 503 charity with Nancy suggesting Epsom follow that route if the Board is accepting more donations. This was why she suggested the organization that is already set up to accept and grant charitable donations.

The Board had a consensus to divide the money already received between the people affected and not accept any further donations at this time

## **FOR DISCUSSION**

### **A. DOT Echo Valley Road over Griffin Brook & Application for Preliminary Estimate**

DOT has given the bridge a status of deficiency, with a potential weight limitation in the future. According to the State's inspection, the bridge is in need of complete replacement or extensive rehabilitation. The bridge replacement is not on the Road Agent's six-year plan. It was noted the floods may have ~~caused~~ ~~the~~ ~~caused~~ ~~the~~ damage. A letter has been prepared for signature requesting estimate of replacement costs for the DOT bridge aid program.

The number of homes between Griffin Brook and the town line was discussed. There are five lots on Echo Valley Road and 5 lots on Hilltop. Center Hill Road Bridge is now open to traffic and the use of Echo Valley Road for detour is not longer in place.

Items for future discussion include the weight limit, emergency vehicles and the estimate request for replacement. Keith asked if the bridge had been reviewed by

FEMA. Nancy noted the town was reimbursed for some work from the 2007 flood. Keith noted as this was not on the current six-year road plan the Board should ask the Road Agent to look at it to see if the bridge replacement could be included.

**Merrimack County Commissioner Bronwyn Asplund-Walsh and Merrimack County Jail Administrator Ron White**

Commissioner Asplund-Walsh verified 11 homes were damaged by the tornado and there was no FEMA money for individual assistance.

Commissioner Asplund-Walsh noted Epsom has utilized county jail work force assistance in the past.

Commissioner Asplund-Walsh noted a letter had been previously sent for the County drug prescription card. It is a program for town citizens and individuals who do not have insurance. All the area drug stores accept the card. She gave the Board a poster and cards for distribution.

Commissioner Asplund-Walsh noted taxes were an issue. She discussed the Merrimack county taxes and the bed tax for nursing homes. In the past the State paid 25% of the tax, but recently passed this cost to the nursing homes. All the counties have collectively filed a lawsuit with the Supreme Court. The suit requests the State take the tax back to take some of the burden off the local taxpayers.

Keith asked how the tax worked, and the amount on each bed. Commissioner Asplund-Walsh said the County is looking at paying \$30,000,000.00; this cost could go to \$60,000,000.00 in the future.

Commissioner Asplund-Walsh noted the County Nursing Home is in full operation, she would be happy to give tours.

Commissioner Asplund-Walsh introduced Ron White, Merrimack County Jail Superintendent who took over the jail in June 2005. The new facility opened in August 2005. Mr. White introduced Daniel Ward and Richard Doucet who also assist at the jail.

Mr. Ward runs the day to day operations. He discussed how they were in the process of rehabbing the old facility using existing inmates. The jail has 36 programs for the inmates with a goal to keep people out of the jails. Mr. Ward explained the programs using minimum security inmates to complete work for towns at no cost. He noted various projects completed for area towns. There is no liability to the towns with individuals being provided that could help with specific projects.

Mr. White noted they do not want to take jobs away from people. He noted Epsom had previously requested assistance with road work, no help was available then. They now have the help and would be glad to assist the town. Mr. White noted the projects have to be ethical, practical and legal.

Keith asked who carries insurance coverage with Mr. White noting Merrimack County is totally responsible for the individuals. Mr. White noted they also make contact with the Police and Fire Departments to let them know they are working in a town.

Keith noted the Police Chief has indicated the Station needs painting with the Fire Chief having discussed needed roof repairs. Work at the cemeteries was also noted. Electronic categorization (excels or access) of Planning and Zoning files were also an option. Commissioner Asplund-Walsh noted the programs are cutting down on inmates returning to incarceration and they are proud of their successes. Representative Carol Brown noted the past use [through the Donation Depot](#) and great success she has had with this program.

Mr. White invited the Board to visit the jail saying it belongs to the county.

Keith noted the town and several neighboring communities were interested in county-wide, regional dispatch service. Commissioner Asplund-Walsh was aware of this; the Sheriff is forming a committee and is hoping to have something brought forward shortly.

### **Russell Bartlett – Deed Land**

Mr. Bartlett noted his family owns a 250 acre tract of land on Gorboro Road. He has been before the Planning Board to discuss a development. Discussion has occurred if the town could use some land with recommendations Mr. Bartlett talk to the Recreation Department and the Conservation Commission. The Recreation Department or EYAA may be interested in 6 acres for athletic fields. Mr. Bartlett has talked to Allison about a conservation easement.

Keith noted some of the land would have to be kept for the cluster development. Joe Wichert noted the intent would be to try to not have a homeowner's organization; some land would be needed for wetlands mitigation. Keith noted the ordinances only have three methods for common land. Mr. Wichert felt if the town took ownership of land it would comply with the spirit of the ordinance.

Keith noted he was for keeping land on the tax roles. He had a concern if the town took control of the land should some of it be used for the town. He expected the development to retain ownership of what would be required for wetland mitigation. He would like Planning Board and Conservation Commission input.

Keith asked what they were looking for from the Board. Mr. Bartlett said if taking title to some of the land would be of interest to the town with or without a

conservation easement. Joanne noted it may be something the town may be interested in doing. Keith noted the brook channel would have to be crossed requiring permits. Mr. Wichert noted Betsy noted the same issue at the Planning Board presentation. Two access points would be developed when they return to the Planning Board.

Mr. Bartlett noted they would be meeting with DES to get their thoughts.

## **FOR DISCUSSION**

### **B. Griffin Road Bridge Contract – Award of Bid**

Sean James, from HTA, met with the Board to review the bids opened last week at the HTA office. He noted the bids came in about 20% below estimate. There were 20 sets of plans sold with 11 bids submitted. One bid was withdrawn due to issues with the bid. That contractor is requesting the Board release the bid bond.

Mr. James gave the Board a list of the corrected bids, noting they felt comfortable with Thibault Corporation, low bidder, able to complete the project. Keith asked if they would sub out the bridge, Mr. James said they would be subbing out the coffer dams, he did not know about the bridge.

Mr. James had the Notice of Approval completed for signature once the bid has been approved by NHDOT. He hopes to receive State approval this week. He felt the work would begin in about a month, with paperwork being completed during this time. The project would be completed up to the gravel surface this year.

**Keith made a motion to release the G.W. Brooks & Son, Inc. from the bidding of the Griffin Road Bridge project as well as release his bid bond with Joanne 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.**

**Keith made a motion to accept the bid of Thibault Corporation for \$389,661.65 for the Griffin Brook Bridge No. 151/097 on Griffin Road with the contingency of approval of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation with Joanne 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.**

**A. DOT Echo Valley Road over Griffin Brook & Application for Preliminary Estimate**

Keith noted the town has to get the costs from the State and have Gordon look at the six-year road plan and see if there is a place to add this bridge to the plan.

**Joanne made a motion to sign the application for the preliminary estimate for the Griffin Brook Bridge over Echo Valley Road with Keith 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.**

### **C. Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission Route 28 Corridor Study**

Joanne noted the study was from the Alton Traffic Circle to the Pembroke Town Line. The towns were being asked to participate up to \$1,400.00 each. The information did not say when the study would begin or how long it would take.

The scope of work was reviewed with Keith feeling it would take 9 to 16 months to collect the data. If the money was needed this fiscal year he questioned where the town would get it. He questioned if it was a high priority that warrants the expenditure with a default budget. He felt the corridor warrants the study as it would assist the Planning Board. The bulk of the accidents are at the traffic circle. Keith felt the study fell short in an area that affects Epsom as it should go to North Pembroke Road in Pembroke. He noted for \$1,400.00 the town would be getting \$62,000.00 of work. The funds could be set aside within the Planning Board's engineering budget. Joanne will have the CNHRPC contacted to address the concerns.

### **D. American Red Cross**

The Red Cross is requesting \$2050.00 from the town based upon the population. Joanne noted no money has been allotted for this. She indicated they could put it in the proposed budget for next year. Keith noted the Red Cross has donated to the town in services and goods for the recent natural disasters, but it would be difficult to donate at this time. He felt they should address this during budget season.

### **E. FYI – NHDOT Homeland Security Applicant Briefing Meetings (Opportunity to Request for Public Assistance)**

This item was discussed previously by the Board.

### **F. NRCS – Emergency Watershed Protection Program (Opportunity to request for Public Assistance)**

Joanne noted this information was from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. They would provide technical and financial services for areas threatened by emergency disasters. Application has to be made within 60 days of the disaster. Joanne questioned if this would help pay for removal of excessive brush

and trees on town property. She felt the Board should have the Road Agent consider this.

Joni Kitson questioned if the town would be double dipping as it is for natural disasters.

Joanne felt they should have the Road Agent check into it for more details. Discussion occurred that private roads or the Class 6 portion of Old Turnpike Road could be covered.

### **G. Request for Building Permit Extension**

The request is from Gary Perry who missed the extension date due to his duties at Webster Park. He is requesting an extension of the building permit. Keith recognized the benefits as Mr. Perry has given to the Town of Epsom and is in support of this request.

**Joanne made a motion to allow Gary Perry to extend his building permit for a single family residence on North Road with Keith 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.**

The Board took a break from 8:44 P.M. to 8:50 P.M.

### **LIAISON REPORTS**

Joanne noted no one has heard from Dick Verville regarding the buyout for Webster Park Lane. She noted that Rick Bilodeau felt the town would not qualify [according to the cost benefit analysis](#).

Joanne noted Deb sent notices to Department Heads about the NIMS training but has not received any responses. Joanne will contact the Department Heads. The next Budget Committee meeting is at 7:00 P.M. on September 18<sup>th</sup>. Gordon Ellis has mentioned he would like to be part of the Highway Department Mutual Aid Program, the cost being \$25.00. The Board members had the CD to review.

Joanne is unable to attend the next Website Committee meeting on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. She noted that Norm was to work with the Department Heads to set up e-mail addresses, but the Department Heads have been slow in responding. Joanne has signed up for the budget workshop on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Joanne reviewed the e-mail from the Northwood Lake Watershed Association. Bob noted they are requesting people to help clean the lake bottom after the lake is lowered. Joanne also noted the Association would like to arrange for the transfer station to accept the debris. The clean-up is scheduled [November 8<sup>th</sup>](#) and [15<sup>th</sup>](#).

Keith felt it was a worthy effort and we should put the information on the Website for people to contact the Association for further information.

Joanne sent an e-mail authorizing the Association to talk to BCEP and coordinate with Bob if they need a form signed.

Joanne wanted to clarify when the public hearing was held to accept donations; ~~no~~, no motion was required to go into the public hearing per information she received from the Local Government Center.

Joanne will bring the minutes of the Suncook Valley Regional Town Association to the next meeting as there may be items the Board would like to discuss.

Joanne noted the Board has not heard anything about the work to occur at the circle. Keith noted DOT's landscape people have had discussions with the plan designers. He noted that the DOT will not be maintaining the landscape and will seeking who will assume the role.

Joanne noted there have been no responses for the Epsom Town Office Building Committee.

Joanne noted the letter in the Confidential File is the same letter as the Board had previously reviewed. Keith noted they did not authorize Attorney Soltani to send the Library response letter. He noted on September 21<sup>st</sup> he met with the Library Trustees and both attorneys. It was a good discussion about the actions and intent of the Trustees. Keith had presented a Use and Occupancy Agreement for review. There is a difference of opinion between the attorneys as to if the Trustees can enter into a multi-year agreement. He noted the Board was not trying to take away the authority of the Library Trustees for the management of the building and property. Their concern was liability and an agreement is in place for ~~the use~~the use of the building. The Trustees felt Board of Selectmen approval of the Agreement moved into their domain. The attorneys are working to massage the Agreement which will then be returned to the Board for review and input before execution.

Keith had met on August 28<sup>th</sup> with Senator Barnes, Representatives Mann, Brown and Yeaton and DOT Commissioner Campbell and Assistant Commissioner Brillhart and Traffic Bureau Administrator Lambert to discussion Deerfield's request for the installation of traffic signals at the intersection of Routes 4 and 107. Keith conveyed the Board's support for -the engineering study for the traffic signals. Representative Mann noted safety concerns for Deerfield residents and high school students using the intersection. The Department requested accident ~~history from~~history from the Epsom Police Department to assist in the determination. Keith has requested the Police Chief provide the information. The Department hopes for a response in about 6 weeks.

Joni noted the new Police Officer was able to enter the August class at the Police Academy.

Joni asked if the attorneys involved with the Library are aware if the Library does not use the building the parking area would be lost. It was noted the library was viewing this as an extension of the library. Joni noted the people in the house next door have asked the Trustees for use of parking spaces, Joanne noted Attorney Soltani is aware of the situation.

Bob noted Chief Preve had someone look at the 2004 cruiser, offering \$1,000.00 for it. Bob told the Chief to take the offer. The Town of Barnstead has looked at the 2005 cruiser with their Board to discuss the purchase tonight.

## **MINUTES FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

### **Final Minutes of August 4, 2008**

**Joanne made a motion to approve the final minutes of August 4, 2008 with Keith 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.**

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

**Joanne made a motion to approve the final minutes of July 28, 2008 with Keith 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.**

### **BOS Non-Public Minutes of August 18, 2008**

**Joanne made a motion to approve the final non-public minutes of August 18, 2008 with Keith 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.**

**Joanne made a motion to unseal the non-public minutes of August 18, 2008 with Keith 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.**

**BOS Non-Public Minutes of August 25, 2008**

Joanne made a motion to approve the final non-public minutes of August 25, 2008 with Keith 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.

**Draft Minutes of August 18, 2008**

Joanne made a motion to approve the draft minutes of August 18, 2008 as amended with Keith 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.

**Draft Minutes of August 25, 2008**

Joanne made a motion to approve the draft minutes of August 25, 2008 as amended with Keith 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.

**Emergency Meeting conference Call Non-Public – August 15, 2008**

It was determined these minutes were previously reviewed.

Joni noted last week the Board came out of the non-public session and stated Mrs. McIntosh approached the Board about becoming their secretary. Joanne and Bob noted Mrs. McIntosh had expressed an interest for quite some time and had individually spoken to all three Board members at separate times

Joni asked when the Board discussed Darlene taking over as secretary. At that point, Joanne responded no. Joanne noted it was discussed as an option in the non-public session.

Joni questioned if the Board had discussed this issue previous to discussing this with Betsy. Joanne noted the Board could not discuss this as the minutes were sealed.

Joanne noted there was one item in FYI she wanted to read.

b. Letter of Recognition – PD

Joanne read the letter from Sgt. Michael praising work done by Officer Flemming.

Bob noted there is also another Police Officer who ~~may be~~ may be hired that does not need to go to the Academy; he only needs to do FTO.

Joni asked about George's letter in 'c' in FYI, Joanne read the letter.

**Joanne made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Keith 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.**

Bob adjourned the meeting at 9:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Bosiak  
Recording Secretary