

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Minutes of April 5, 2010**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Charles McMahon called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Selectmen Bruce Breton, Ross McLeod, Galen Stearns and Roger Hohenberger were present, as was Town Administrator David Sullivan. Mr. McMahon opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mr. McLeod noted the following: athletic fields are still closed; Easter Egg Hunt was a great success – thanks extended to Mr. Senibaldi and Mr. Yergeau; tennis nets are up; Skate park is not yet open; Earth Day is 4/17; Spring recreation programs are now registering; and, Summer recreation flyer will be available soon.

**LIAISON:** None.

**MINUTES:** Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to approve the minutes of 3/1, 8, 15, and 22 as written. Passed unanimously.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Letter received from Attorney Weaver/Verizon relative to possible installation of a cell tower on Town owned recreation or conservation land. It was the consensus of the Board to hear the presentation with the Conservation Commission present. Mr. Sullivan will follow-up to arrange a date.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS:** Mr. Sullivan advised that the Depot project was progressing, however three unforeseen items had arisen regarding which he was working with the state historian and the architect: (1) an old drainage manhole had been discovered which was intact and could date to 1872; (2) additional footings for the old water tower had been found, and; (3) the AT&T fiber optic line needs to be relocated as it is too close to the decking. Mr. Sullivan noted that the additional costs to the Town will range from \$1,500 - \$2,000, funds are available, and all items have been submitted to the State for review.

*Mr. McLeod* noted that last fall the clean out of the swales at Griffin Park was approved and begun, and Mr. Garfield of the Soccer Association had recently discovered that the soccer fields will not fit now due to the work. He presented photos of the area to the Board regarding this and other concerns, such as exposed under drains.

Mr. Sullivan noted that he had looked at the area that afternoon with Maintenance Supervisor Al Barlow and Mr. Yennaco from Delahunty's. He clarified that the project had been started in the fall, but the weather had been too wet to complete it, however, Mr. Yennaco will be returning within the next week to 10 days to complete the project. Mr. Sullivan noted that the original plan had been to re-seed the area, however, sod could be laid at additional cost if that is Soccer's desire. Discussion ensued regarding the other disturbed area around the bridge, which is a Town project.

Mr. McLeod requested that Mr. Garfield be consulted regarding where to place sod versus seed, and expressed concerns that Soccer and Recreation had not been notified to flag the area. Mr. Sullivan replied that this was, in fact, a Recreation project coordinated by Mr. Senibaldi.

Mr. McMahon inquired whether a cost estimate was available for the sod, and Mr. Yennaco approached to note that he did not have a plan for the area so he could not estimate the expense. He added, however, that the project is 80% complete and he will not charge additional labor costs for sod versus seed.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION:** Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. Stearns seconded to enter into non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II c. Roll call vote all “yes”. The topic of discussion was reputations and the Board, Mr. Sullivan and Ms. Devlin were in attendance.

Mr. Sullivan updated the Board on a tax deeding issue, and it was the consensus of the Board that Mr. Sullivan proceed to draft a forbearance agreement as described.

**TOWN CLERK STRATEGIC PLAN:** Town Clerk Nicole Merrill reviewed with the Board her strategic plan, highlights of which included:

- Expanded Office Hours, including the last Saturday of each month
- Expanded use of Technology, including E-reg services
- Improved communication/public outreach including web updates and possible implementation of web-based “suggestion box”
- Enhanced inter-departmental communications, including working with other departments to develop protocols for disseminating information
- Expansion of the staff’s knowledge base through seminars, conferences, etc.
- Establishment of a Records Retention Committee
- Expansion of departmental technology, including replacement of current monitors with flat screens.

Mr. Hohenberger inquired how the new office was working, and Ms. Merrill replied positively, noting that the flow in the lobby is better and staff is closer to their records.

Mr. Hohenberger then inquired whether residents could utilize the E-Reg system to search previous year registration fees, and Ms. Merrill replied in the negative as the system is still too new and the database needs to be populated.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed suggestion box, email notices utilized by the department, and the town census versus the federal census data.

**CEMETERY BIDS:** Cemetery Trustee Chair Wendi Devlin reviewed with the Board those bids received for cemetery maintenance, as follows:

<b>VENDOR</b>	<b>YEAR #1</b>	<b>YEAR #2</b>	<b>YEAR #3</b>
Clean-Cut Landscaping, Methuen, MA	\$ 22,000.00	\$ 22,660.00	\$ 23,339.80
The Shrub Guy, Hudson, NH	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 24,000.00
Alpha Landscape, Windham, NH	\$ 25,475.00	No bid	No bid
Concrete Services & Landscape, No. Andover, MA	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 27,000.00
Delahunty's Nursery , Windham, NH	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 27,000.00
Pristine Greens, Windham NH	\$ 27,073.61	\$ 27,615.08	\$ 28,167.38
Tru-Green, Nashua, NH	\$ 32,625.00	No bid	No bid
Gregg's General Outdoor Svcs., Hudson NH	\$ 40,400.00	\$ 41,600.00	\$ 42,450.00
The Gleam Team, Windham, NH	\$ 58,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 62,000.00

Mr. Hohenberger questioned Ms. Devlin as to why the Board should consider the recommendation to expend additional funds and award the bid to Concrete Services, and what experience was necessary to maintain a cemetery beyond grass cutting. Ms. Devlin noted that there are several items that entail a level of experience beyond mowing including the ability to recognize potential issues with foundations/lots, care of items around the stones, and the public relations skill to deal with cemetery visitors. She noted that Concrete Services has provided excellent service to the Town, and she continues to receive contact from residents complimenting his services.

Mr. Hohenberger inquired whether any foundation repairs, etc. had been required last year, and Ms. Devlin indicated she did not believe so, however this year's spring walk-through had not been completed as yet and it was likely that, with the excessive rains, there would be some issues.

Mr. McLeod indicated that he did not see that a lack of cemetery experience would disqualify any of the vendors from doing the landscaping at the cemeteries and, despite Ms. Devlin's responses to Mr. Hohenberger, he could not see a reason to move away from the low bidder. Ms. Devlin reiterated her comments to Mr. Hohenberger and added that it should be likened to a Cemetery Superintendent as opposed to a landscaper, encompassing a multitude of things beyond groundskeeping including customer service. She noted that the recommendation is within the budget and the Trustees, who are charged with the oversight of the cemeteries, feel it is in the best interest of the cemeteries and the residents to contract with an experienced company.

Mr. Breton noted that experience and public relations were noted within the bid specs, and Mr. McLeod added that the presumption would then be that each of the vendors understood that and bid accordingly. Ms. Devlin explained that the Trustees had been seeking a vendor with experience in Cemetery maintenance, and that it had been verified with Clean-cut and Alpha that neither had previous experience. She also noted she had contacted the one cemetery related reference listed by The Shrub Guy, who had advised that his duties there consisted only of mowing and that, given the small disparity between The Shrub Guy's bid and the recommended vendor, the Trustees felt it did not behoove the Town to switch.

Mr. Ben Sgro, of the Shrub Guy, approached to indicate he had over 30+ years experience in landscaping and knew how to do cemeteries. He then cited his experience in Litchfield, NH, whom Ms. Devlin confirmed was the reference listed that she had spoken to. He then noted he also has maintained large malls, etc., and has a degree in horticulture.

Mr. John DiPerri of Clean-cut Landscaping approached to indicate that although he did not have any experience in cemetery maintenance, he had been awarded a similar contract with the Town of Kingston the previous week. He felt the cemeteries are no different than any other job they do as landscapers, and that he and his crew are professional and have a dress code of collared shirts.

Discussion ensued regarding headstones and the additional care needed around them, and Ms. Devlin confirmed that indeed the vendor would need to be aware and cautious of the plantings, mementos and the potential for damage to the older slates from weedwacking, etc.

Mr. Jay Yennaco approached noting that, although he was not the low bidder, he was confident that any one of the bidders could handle the work involved, including any masonry duties.

Mr. Breton indicated that he would like to remind the Board of their refusal to spend additional funds last year at his urging toward the audit.

Mr. McMahon noted that the Town does not necessarily always award to the lowest bidder, rather performance should be rewarded and recommendations and reputations acknowledged.

Mr. McLeod indicated that he believed the vendors had all bid per the specifications and that he did not find that the Trustees' had presented anything to quantify and justify the delta of \$5,000 between the low bidder and their recommendation. Mr. McLeod then moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to award the bid to Clean-cut Landscaping in the amount of \$22,000 for one year. Passed 3-2, with Mr. Stearns and Mr. McMahon opposed.

Mr. McLeod then indicated he would like to acknowledge the vendors who spoke, and particularly Mr. Yennaco; adding that he prefers to award contracts to local vendors whenever possible.

**HIGHWAY GARAGE/SALT SHED UPDATE:** Mr. Sullivan advised the Board that he had confirmed that afternoon that there would be no issue in obtaining the necessary access permit for the site. Mr. Peter Zohdi of Herbert Associates then reviewed a revised plan with the Board, noting the following items:

- The site work encompasses a total of 63,000 sft
- 8,000 cubic yards of material will be blasted/cut
- 7,300 cubic yards of fill will be required, including gravel and pavement
- 1,450 sft of wetlands will be impacted
- 1,518 sft of dredge and fill will be required
- The project will include seven catch basins with tree boxes, 301 feet of 12" culvert, 48 feet of 36" culvert, and 8" perforated pipe underdrains
- The location for a future garage has been established
- The plan is now 90% complete, and Mr. Zohdi is working on obtaining EPA and DES permits

Mr. Stearns inquired whether enough space had been allocated to allow for parking/storage of plows, frames, etc. Highway Agent Jack McCartney replied in the affirmative, noting there is sufficient room to store items to the right of the building, if necessary.

Mr. Hohenberger inquired whether the front lot should be expanded to allow for a larger turning radius for tractor trailers, and discussion ensued. Mr. McCartney noted that the worst case scenario radius had been considered in designing the lot.

Mr. Hohenberger then inquired whether closed drainage would be utilized, and Mr. McCartney replied that direction was being sought from the EPA regarding the drainage. Discussion ensued regarding the tree box design and their absorption of soluble materials.

Mr. McLeod inquired about space for snow removal at the site, and Mr. Zohdi noted the front area is available.

Mr. Stearns then sought clarification that the tree boxes do not remove salt from the run-off and Mr. Zohdi replied that that was correct; they will only remove soluble materials. He added that he was working with the EPA regarding the salt. Mr. Hohenberger noted that the Board had assured the voters that the area would be protected, and that he hoped extra precautions were be taken. Mr. Zohdi replied that no corners were being cut on environmental issues.

Mr. Stearns inquired whether closed drainage was planned for inside the garage, and Mr. McCartney replied that the building is pitched to curbing and then to the tree boxes/outside collection areas. He added that he had met with the DES regarding possible plans/means to collect the brine which he would like to do. Discussion ensued.

Mr. McMahon inquired where the plows will be stored, and Mr. McCartney noted a 100-150' area will be leveled off over time, but not paved, to the right for storage. Discussion ensued as to inclusion of this area on the plan, whether the area would be visible from Route 111 which Mr. McCartney indicated it would not, and that it should be completed now rather than in the future.

Mr. McMahon then inquired whether the plan was ready to be placed out to bid, and Mr. Zohdi replied in the negative, noting that the septic approval from the DES is still pending, as is the EPA permits.

Mr. Stearns then moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded that Mr. Zohdi move forward with submittal of the plan as presented to the EPA and DES for permitting.

Mr. Hohenberger then noted that he hoped all available precautions would be taken to mitigate blasting impacts to the area, (ie: small blasts).

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Dennis Senibaldi approached to inquire whether the Highway Safety Committee had weighed in on the plan, and Mr. Sullivan replied in the negative, as they had been awaiting the final plan. Mr. Senibaldi then inquired where the Transfer Station trailer, which is currently parked on roadway to the site in question, would be relocated to. Mr. McCartney indicated that the majority of the area where the trailer rests is staying and therefore the trailer can remain there. Discussion ensued relative to extending this paved area back to compensate for the lost footage at the beginning and the Transfer Station working to redesign their site so the trailer can be located there. It was the consensus of the Board that this issue be worked out between the Highway and Transfer Station departments.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS:** Mr. Sullivan advised that the Town owned property on Governor Dinsmore/Mockingbird Hill Road, site of the historic plaque, had been inspected relative to tree damage and that Mr. McCartney will work to clean-out the leaners within the next week or two. He added that, later in the summer, Mr. McCartney will arrange for selective clearing of the property.

**ADMINISTRATION STRATEGIC PLAN:** Mr. Sullivan and Mrs. Call reviewed the Administration's Strategic Plan with the Board, highlights of which included:

- Improving communication/public outreach, including enhanced use of the website, resumption of the cable show "Town Talk", and hosting of a "Community Fair"
- Expanding use of technology toward more efficient services including facilitating expanded use of credit card and other electronic means of payment and development of on-line forms

- Fostering of harmonious staff/management relationships including providing administrative staff time to meet to discuss ideas/concerns, meeting with administrative staff in a structured setting semi-annually, holding weekly staff meetings, meeting with union representatives annually, and updating/expanding departmental safety measures
- Expanding outreach to department heads including establishing once/month “update meetings” with each, scheduling once/year meetings with Selectmen for each, scheduling individual department head items first on Selectmen agendas, and soliciting/encouraging input for policies and ordinances
- Maintaining a stable tax rate including reviewing/addressing as needed all tax exemptions/credits, reviewing health insurance options, expanding use of revenue budgeting, and analyzing of fees across all departments
- Updating policies and ordinances including restarting the Policy Committee and updating or development of at least three policies per year
- Expanding staff and capabilities including addition of a bookkeeper position, expanding cross-training among staff, reviewing the need for a new Town Hall and developing a plan for same, working with the Highway Agent on the salt shed project, working with the Go Green committee on energy audits and establishing a Local Energy Committee, handling maintenance need proactively and conducting annual facility reviews, and reviewing town-wide infrastructure including roads and sewer near ponds

Mr. Sullivan clarified that the plan does not include addressing ongoing projects, such as the Castle Hill Road culvert repair. Mr. Breton noted that he saw no mention of departmental/comprehensive audits either, which the Board had discussed multiple times. Mr. Sullivan noted that that was an ongoing concern which is being addressed, and Mrs. Call added that cost estimates had been obtained for departmental reviews. Discussion ensued, and Mrs. Call clarified that these audits would be supplemental to the regulatory audit and that parameters need to be developed with Board input. After further discussion regarding the previous proposal received for further departmental audits, it was the consensus of the Board that nothing be done on this matter until budget season.

Mr. Stearns moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to adjourn. Passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendi Devlin, Administrative Assistant

*Note: These minutes are in draft form and have not been submitted to the Board for approval.*