

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN WORKSHOP**

**Minutes of 06-20-11**

**4:15 p.m.**

***Selectmen:***

***Colette Worsman, Chairman  
Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman  
Miller C. Lovett  
Nathan J. Torr  
Herbert R. Vadney***

***Town Manager:***

***Phillip L. Warren***

***Recording Clerk:***

***Karin Landry***

Call to Order: Chair Worsman called the meeting to order 4:15 p.m. She introduced the Board, Town Manager, and the Recording Clerk, and made announcement pertaining to emergency exits and the use of cell phones.

**W 11-13      Belknap County Economic Development Council Update**

Belknap County Economic Development Council (BCEDC) Board members Randy Eifert and Greg Goddard updated the Board on the services BCEDC provides to communities. BCEDC acts as economic development coordinator for all towns in Belknap County. Its mission is to promote the economic vitality of Belknap County by providing coordination and leadership and facilitating sustainable economic growth and the preservation and creation of quality jobs. It does so by providing technical and grant writing assistance to new businesses and businesses wishing to expand through programs such as the Service Corp. of Retired Executives. Its countywide initiatives include community outreach, survey of manufacturers, business resource fair, local business resource forums, and workforce development. BCEDC is in the process of identifying catalyst projects that it will provide significant staff support to this year. BCEDC has access to a vast database of funding sources, including private foundations and state and federal grant programs. Its new Executive Director has significant grant-writing experience and is finding that many non-profit groups/projects and communities throughout the County are in need of this type of assistance. Since March of this year, BCEDC has assisted the Colonial Theatre, Winni Children's Museum, Sundial Building, WOW Trail, Aviation & Aerospace Education Center at Winnepesaukee, and the downtown revitalization in Belmont. In the past, BCEDC provided assistance on projects including J. Jill, the Mill Falls project, Riverfront Place, the Scott & Williams building, and Chamberlin Springs water bottling facility. Mr. Goddard explained that the majority of businesses that seek assistance from BCEDC are struggling and in need of some type of unconventional financing, and there is an understanding that neither the business or BCEDC will openly discuss the matter. BCEDC intends to periodically update the Board and solicit its feedback.

Dialogue ensued regarding the workforce development project. BCEDC is partnering on the project with the Laconia Chamber of Commerce and Lakes Region United Way. The goal of the program is to demonstrate that there are good, high paying jobs in the Lakes Region, and to get 200 college graduates working in businesses in the Lakes Region by 2020. Selectman Brothers suggested that BCEDC coordinate with the Greater Meredith Program, who has implemented a similar initiative, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and strengthen the program. Selectman Lovett pointed out that while the program can be started with very little money, it cannot be

sustained in the long run without additional funding. Mr. Goddard explained that BCEDC collaborated with other organizations for that reason. Chair Worsman inquired about the funding of the program. It is currently funded through various sources, the largest of which is the County. The goal at the time of inception was that the County was going to provide seed money, and BCEDC would raise money through memberships and contributions from private businesses. However, it became clear that doing so wouldn't leave much time for economic development. A secondary source of funding was created through interest income generated from various loan fund opportunities, and had limited success. It is now becoming clear that members of the County Delegation would like BCEDC to be self sufficient. BCEDC is exploring ways to do that going forward. Selectman Worsman suggested conferring with the GMP program, which has been very successful in fundraising.

Selectman Brothers suggested that while in many instances the type of assistance that is provided by BCEDC cannot be discussed openly in public, the broader mission of economic development can be spoken about without using specifics. It is important for governing bodies to be able to determine where they are getting value for the contributions they ask to be made from taxpayers' money.

#### **W 10-39 (Continued) Septic System Ordinance Proposal**

The Town Manager introduced the matter. This is a continuation of the Board's review of the proposed Septic System Ordinance that was presented last October. The Board was provided with Community Development Director John Edgar's Staff Report on the proposed regulations pertaining to subsurface wastewater disposal systems in the Lake Waukewan Watershed, supporting information on the proposed regulations, a letter from the Waukewan Shoreowners Association endorsing the proposed regulation, and correspondence with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. The proposal is presented by Mr. Edgar on behalf of the Waukewan Watershed Advisory Committee, and is part of the Master Plan for Lake Waukewan.

Selectman Torr has been involved with the Waukewan Watershed Advisory Committee in various capacities, and believes the regulations are necessary. There are 30+ septic systems that fall in the category of substandard by virtue of the fact that they were built prior to 1950, or have not been inspected. The Committee has done an excellent job with its campaign to reduce phosphorous levels in the Lake in order to promote water quality, and septic systems in failure are one of the main sources of phosphorous. If the regulations are adopted, they will be the first of their kind in the state of New Hampshire. He supports taking steps to adopt the regulations because Waukewan is the water supply source.

Selectman Brothers inquired how similar programs around the state have been funded, monitored, and enforced and whether there are provisions for phasing in the plan. While the Staff Report details how the program at Lake Massabesic in Manchester works, Mr. Edgar explained that while the program is the only example DES could refer to that is similar in nature in terms of being proactive, it is not similar to what is being considered for Lake Waukewan. Most communities dictate that systems shall be installed in accordance with state rules. The proposed regulations ensure that if there is a proposal to increase the number of bedrooms, and therefore increase the demand on the system, a septic system to support that demand must be put in at the time of development. If the waterfront in Center Harbor and New Hampton is included, there are a total of 186 septic systems, 34% of which are categorized as very high risk. Of the 86 systems that predate the advent of subsurface regulation, 52% are categorized as high or very high risk. The hope is that eventually the entirety of the shoreline will be protected. Dialogue ensued regarding the effectiveness of municipalities and the state in enforcing and monitoring current

statutes to identify landowners who may be in failure, and requiring that specific steps be taken. Mr. Edgar explained that there are no adequate state statutes at this time. Although ENV WQ 1025 provides for waterfront property assessment studies, the site assessment does not constitute an evaluation of the existing system on the property, but is an evaluation of the site to determine if it can support a system meeting state requirements, and only occurs at the time of a real estate transfer. The regulations require an evaluation every five years for properties on the shoreline that are 40+ years old to ensure those systems are not in failure.

Selectman Worsman inquired if an evaluator is required to report obvious failures. Mr. Edgar is not familiar with requirements for licensed designers or evaluators to do so. Although neighbors generally monitor surrounding areas, not all failures rise to the surface, so there can be a failed system with no odors.

Selectman Lovett inquired about the timeline for enacting the regulations. Mr. Edgar explained that once there is a level of concurring approval from the Board, a public hearing would be held, and then the matter would go back to the Planning Board. Selectman Lovett is concerned with the amount of time it will take to bring the matter to hearing and adoption, and will be looking at the matter in terms of incremental steps to protect the water supply that go beyond state regulations. The Town Manager explained that the amount of time spent reviewing the matter is ultimately up to the Board.

Mr. Edgar reminded the Board of the challenges faced every day relevant to management of the surface water supply including a developed shoreline spanning five towns, encouraging of lake contact activities such as swimming and boating, a public beach and boat ramp, and industrial uses. A multi-faceted approach has been advocated by the Watershed Advisory Committee, including the Don't "P" in the Lake program, the installation of a rain garden, and working with property owners to reestablish vegetative buffers. Mr. Edgar pointed out that Waukegan is considered "impaired" by DES because of the low dissolved oxygen levels that have been reoccurring over time.

Selectman Vadney is concerned with new ordinances because they always grow. He inquired if individual pieces of land can be evaluated individually for lush vegetation and how they sit in relation to the seasonal high water table, rather than addressing the matter as a policy issue. Mr. Edgar explained that it is known that the majority of the properties identified are smaller, older camps that have not been redeveloped, but that properties have not been probed in terms of looking for signs of failure. Selectman Vadney inquired about allowances for small lots. Mr. Edgar explained that if a holding tank is state approved, it can be used as a last resort.

Selectman Brothers expressed concerns with government telling people what public policy is going to be and with focusing on one water body. He inquired if all water within the framework of the jurisdiction has been considered. Mr. Edgar explained that while it makes sense to address the entirety of the shoreline in Meredith, the water committee purposely focused on the properties that are the highest risk to water quality given their proximity to the Lake. Selectman Brothers assured Mr. Edgar that rather than focusing on specifics at this point, as a Board member he is getting his arms around what he believes the charge should be, and whether there are distinctive advantages to focusing on one water body.

Chair Worsman pointed out that the wastewater treatment plant is excellent in handling the demand placed on it and does not wish to lose sight of the fact that the system is working. From a legislative point of view, the Board has experienced that DES has been heavy handed on other matters. New Hampshire is one of the strictest states in the nation for rules and regulations for

water supply and pollution control. The Board is contemplating charging a replacement cost, permit and design fees, the pumping and evaluation of systems every five years, and has not considered the fact that systems that are not used for a period of time will regenerate. Her concern is that the focus of the draft is very limited and that with experience the regulations could potentially be expanded to include other water bodies in the Waukewan watershed and the Town of Meredith, variations of septic tank pump outs, and swimming and boating prohibitions. She is concerned about the demand it will place on citizens through unfunded mandates.

The Town Manager will schedule that matter for a future workshop to continue dialogue.

The remaining agenda items will be scheduled for the next workshop. In the interim, the Town Manager will follow up on the letter that was forwarded to the state in April 2009 regarding truck traffic on Waukewan Street.

*Selectman Lovett motioned to adjourn the Workshop at 5:30 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Torr. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Phillip L. Warren, Town Manager

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Colette Worsman, Chairman

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Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman

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Miller C. Lovett

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Nathan J. Torr

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Herbert R. Vadney