

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Minutes of 03-22-10
5:30 p.m.

Selectmen:

(Absent with Notice)

Peter F. Brothers, Chairman
Miller C. Lovett, Vice Chairman
Nathan Torr
Charles G. Palm
Colette Worsman

Town Manager:

Phillip L. Warren

Recording Clerk:

Karin Landry

Call to Order: Chairman Peter Brothers called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He introduced the Board, Town Manager, and the Recording Clerk, and made announcements pertaining to fire exits, listening assisted devices, the use of microphones, and cell phones.

ACCEPTANCE AND/OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES:

10-01 Minutes of the February 8, 2010 Regular Meeting.

Selectman Worsman motioned to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2010 Regular Meeting. Seconded by Selectman Palm. 4-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

- A reorganizational meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Friday, March 26, at 3 p.m. at the community center. Reorganization of the Board typically takes place at the first regular meeting following Town Meeting, but March 26th is the first date all five members of the Board are available. Various Board appointments will be made at the meeting. The meeting has been posted.
- A letter was received from the Center Harbor Board of Selectmen requesting the Town to partially fund a perambulation project. While it is logical to share the expense of the required project with another community, there are many restrictions in the contract governing what can and cannot be done in connection with the results of the proposed project. Ideally, the Town of Meredith would like to retain control of the information identified in the project, and integrate it into any and all systems the Town has and will have in the future. The Board authorized the Town Manager to issue correspondence thanking Center Harbor for their invitation, and informing them of the reasons it chose not to participate in the project. Center Harbor might wish to inquire if some of the restrictions can be loosened or eliminated. If the Town of Meredith issues an RFP for the project, it will be with fewer restrictions.

- The Town Manager inquired if the Board wishes to continue with the past practice of appropriating \$8,000 to \$10,000 to plant flowers in boxes and whiskey barrels in the Hesky Park area. Planting, maintenance, watering, and fall clean up are included in the appropriation. The flower boxes on the bridge are not included. The Hesky Park plantings will go out the bid. The plantings at the Town Hall are maintained by the Garden Club, and the plantings at the Library are maintained by the Greater Meredith Program (GMP) and a private group. The plantings at the community center are maintained free of charge by the GMP. Dialogue ensued regarding the GMP's plans to plant trees on private property in various locations and at Hesky Park. Selectman Lovett suggested that a discussion take place with Bonnie Ireland of the GMP regarding the planting of trees at Hesky Park. In addition, Arbor Day and memorial plantings will likely take place.
- The seasonal road ban continues to be in place. It is consistent with bans in surrounding communities. The Board does not wish to prolong the inconvenience of the road ban, but has an obligation to do what is necessary to protect the roads surfaces.
- Dialogue took place at the workshop prior to the Board meeting regarding a motion that was made at Town Meeting with respect to the School District. The motion entertained a study to dissolve the School District. If it is not acted on within 45 days, a special Town Meeting will be called. The School District will address the matter at their meeting scheduled for March 23. There was a consensus among the Board to wait until the School District has met to move forward on the matter. The matter will be reviewed at the reorganizational meeting of the Board of Selectmen scheduled for Friday.

Resident and School Board member John Carty told the Board that resident Mark Flanders made a motion at Town Meeting that the Selectmen ask the School Board to undertake a study of the feasibility and suitability of the withdrawal of the Town of Meredith from the Interlakes School District. The motion is consistent with RSA 195, and the School Board has no obligation to undertake that study until the Selectboard requests that they do so.

It is the Board's intention to make every reasonable effort at opening up dialogue with the School District to discuss the impact the entities have on each other, and to have a better understanding of the objectives and goals of the separate and distinct entities. There has been a clear message from the voters of Meredith that the dialogue needs to take place before moving forward.

Selectman Lovett advised that the new information from Mr. Carty be verified. There was a consensus among the Board at the workshop that a lot of discussion needs to take place on the matter. Mark Flanders was in no way suggesting a split from the School District, but rather that more information on the matter be supplied, including the cost and implications of division.

Selectman Palm stressed that the motion calls for performing a study to look at the details relative to withdrawal, not initiating the act of withdrawing.

The Chair favors the opportunity for the parties involved to quiet some of their anger and look at the options for resolving what may have taken place.

Resident Paula Trombi suggested that the Board include a "New Business" category on their workshop agendas to indicate that additional items may be addressed. The Chair explained the workshop format, including the opportunity to initiate discussion on constructive business in the event there is additional time once the agenda items are addressed. Ms. Trombi recited the version of the motion she brought to the meeting: "I move that the Selectmen ask the School Board to undertake a study of the feasibility and suitability of the withdrawal of the Town of Meredith from the Interlakes School District in accordance with RSA 195.25. Should the School Board decide not to undertake the study within 45 days, the Selectmen should call a special Town Meeting for the purpose of considering whether the Town will direct the School Board to conduct the study as allowed in the RSA." Ms. Trombi's objection is that the School District meeting was run by the School District Moderator in accordance with Roberts Rules, the vote was taken by legal residents, and that those who agree or disagree with the vote should have done so at the School District or Town Meeting. She views the motion as a knee-jerk reaction by some of those who do not like the results of the vote.

The Chair pointed out that what took place at the School District meeting has a significant impact on the citizens and taxpayers of Meredith. He attended both meetings, and noted that Roberts Rules of Order were not followed at the School District meeting. He supports the opportunity to revisit a process when it does not work well.

Mr. McCarty told the Board that any Town has the right under law to choose whether they stay in a school district. If the School Board chooses not to undertake a study within 45 days of a Selectboard's request that they do so, a special Town Meeting can be held to direct the School Board to undertake the study.

Resident John McKeown, lived in a small town that chose not to join with another school district because they would be forced to give up control of things such as class size and number of teachers. He believes the vote at the School District meeting was a travesty and a joke as far as democracy is concerned.

The Town Manager recited RSA 195, which governs the procedure by which a majority vote on a warrant at a regular or special Town Meeting can direct the School Board to conduct a study. He will email the RSA in its entirety to the Board.

- The Energy Committee has been established, the members appointed, and a charge set forth. The Town has been awarded an energy efficiency and conservation block grant in the amount of \$55,848. The funds are for building energy audits on three municipal buildings, lighting upgrades on six buildings, and studies for energy conservation and implementation. He acknowledged John Edgar and Angela LaBrecque for their efforts in procuring the grant. In addition, a matching grant in the amount of \$10,000 has been awarded by the New Hampshire Electric Coop.

VISITORS AND RESIDENTS COMMENTS:

None

SELECTMENS COMMENTS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:**10-10 Childs Park Fundraising Update**

At the direction of the Board, the Town Manager contacted Nancy Mayville of the Department of Transportation seeking confirmation that the state will not interfere with improvements to Childs Park when it moves forward with road improvements to Meredith Center. Ms. Mayville informed Mr. Warren that the Town must apply for a driveway permit, and that it may choose to utilize 2:1 funding from the state, but did not confirm whether a roundabout or another road configuration will be used in Meredith Center. The state will have plans on file when the driveway permit is filed. The design plan for the Park includes a conceptual roundabout that does not interfere with the existing highway right of way. Proposed road improvements would go through a robust public hearing process wherein objections to the road design could be made. In addition, the CIP committee is of the opinion that the state will not destroy improvements to the park in order to put in a road. Mr. Warren does not believe it is possible to receive further commitment from the state, and recommends moving forward with the driveway permit.

The Chair had the opportunity to review the conceptual design proposed by the Park improvements subcommittee, and is comfortable that it clearly falls outside the right of way easement. In addition, the voters supported the appropriation of \$60,000 for improvements to the Park at Town Meeting.

Selectman Palm is concerned that the placement of the proposed driveway might interfere with a redesign of the road improvements, and necessitate changes to improvements that have been made to the park. He wants to be certain that taxpayer dollars do not have to be spent more than once. Parks & Recreation Director Vint Choiniere is comfortable that improvements to the park will not interfere with a redesign of the driveway necessitated by a potential redesign of the road. If the state moves forward with the roundabout design, it will dramatically enlarge the park.

There was a general consensus among the Board to apply for a driveway permit forthwith.

Selectman Palm motioned to endorse the fundraising plans as detailed by the Friends of the Meredith Parks & Recreation Committee. Seconded by Selectman Worsman. 4-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

The Chair thanked the Parks & Recreation committee, and particularly the fundraising subcommittee, for their efforts in coordinating the fundraising activities. Selectman Palm

acknowledged the very generous donation made by Lou Kahn on behalf of and in memory of Bobby Smythe.

ADJOURNMENT:

Selectman Palm motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Worsman. 4-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Phillip L. Warren, Town Manager

Peter F. Brothers, Chairman

Karin Landry, Recording Clerk

Miller C. Lovett, Vice Chairman

Charles G. Palm

Colette Worsman