

BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING
Minutes of April 19, 2010
5:30 p.m.

Selectmen:

(Absent with Notice)
(Absent with Notice)

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

Town Manager:

Phillip L. Warren

Recording Clerk:

Karin Landry

Call to Order: Chairman Chuck Palm 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 -16 Minutes of the March 26 Board Meeting and the April 5 Workshop and Board Meeting.

Selectman Worsman motioned to accept the minutes of the March 26 Board Meeting and the April 5 Workshop and Regular Board Meeting. Seconded by Selectman Torr.

The Chair clarified that all previously submitted corrections to said minutes will be incorporated in the final version of the documents.

3-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

The Town Manager previously requested that the Board contact local representatives to voice concerns regarding SB 492, which extends the property tax exemption for telecommunications poles and conduits for two years. The bill was voted inexpedient to legislate by a 15 to 4 vote this week. The vote of the House will be taken on April 21. There is a concern that if the vote fails in the House, the SB 492 language will be attached to a bill that is currently favored in the Senate, and the amendment will be accepted in order to pass the bill. The New Hampshire Municipal Association has asked local governing bodies to contact their senators to voice their concerns that SB 492 should not pass, and that the language should not be included as an amendment to another bill. SB 492 places an unfair advantage on telecommunications companies because they do not have to pay tax on their real property, as both electric and telephone companies do at this time.

The Town Manager is a member of the advisory group to the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program. The costs of the Program as a whole continue to rise, due in part to the aggressive capital improvements program they have undertaken. Meredith's share for participating in the program for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2010 will increase by only \$2,171. If anticipated credits are received from the state, Meredith's share for participating in the program could be

level funded this year. The Program is undertaking a study that will allow it to move towards a more user based means of assessing costs. The Town Manager will keep the Board updated on the matter.

The Lawn Care Committee, a subcommittee of the Waukewan Watershed Advisory Committee, will hold a press conference on Wednesday, April 21, at 10 a.m. at Church Landing. They will discuss their efforts to initiate a program that would voluntarily stop the use of pesticides and phosphorus based fertilizers and lawn care products in the Town of Meredith, and particularly in the areas surrounding the watershed. The Committee made an informational presentation to the Board at the workshop prior to this meeting.

A meeting of the school committee is scheduled for Wednesday, May 5, at 6:30 p.m. at the Interlakes Elementary School, to discuss the motion at Town Meeting and the study request that was presented to the Board of Selectmen. There will be a presentation on the relevant statutes and a brief overview of the history of this issue in the state. The Board and the public are invited to attend.

Rick Desharnais, who has acted as Program Director and Assistant Director in the Parks & Recreation Department, is leaving his employment with the Town to run the athletic programs for the City of Lebanon. Rick will be deeply missed by staff and coworkers. The Board will prepare a letter of appreciation for his ten years of service to the Town.

The Town has been researching and considering an alternate health care plan for active and retired employees. Thorough dialogue on the matter has taken place in two workshops. The Town Manager strongly recommends that the Board initiate the changes in the health insurance program as presented in the workshops.

Selectman Torr moved that the Board initiate the changes in the health insurance program as presented in the workshops. Seconded by Selectman Worsman.

The Chair briefly reviewed the benefits to employees and the Town in moving to the Harvard Pilgrim plan. There is a consensus among the Board that doing so is a win-win situation for everyone involved.

3-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

VISITOR'S AND RESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

Resident Jim Hughes is very pleased with the quality of the Town Report. He is disappointed that it is not more widely read, especially in view of the resources that are expended in getting the material ready and printing it. The Town Report is a great resource for learning more about where tax dollars are going and what is happening in the Town of Meredith.

Resident Paula Trombi inquired about the procedure for posting Board meeting minutes on the website. The Town Manager explained that the law dictates that the minutes have to be made available for inspection at any time, but it is silent on posting them on the website. The policy is to post the minutes on the website once they have been approved and signed.

SELECTMEN COMMENTS: (Reports on Committees 2nd meeting each month)

Selectman Torr invited all those with an interest to attend the Lawn Care Committee press conference scheduled for Wednesday, 10 a.m. at Church Landing.

Selectman Palm reported that the Water Study Committee met last Thursday evening. Going forward, increases in water and sewer rates will be considered because of the aging infrastructure. The water plant is currently running at 90% capacity, the remaining 10% is kept as reserves. It appears that some benefit will be received from the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program if and when it changes to a flow based program. It is anticipated that a workshop regarding the Program will be held in July.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

10-17 Tree Donation in Memory of Phil French
Arbor Day Tree Plantings - Greater Meredith Program

The New Hampshire Arborists Association through Collins Tree Service, wishes to plant a tree in memory of Phil French, a former tree warden and owner of a local tree business. The Association will plant and maintain the tree, and put the plaque in place. The Town Manager asked that the Board accept the donation

Selectman Worsman motioned to accept the tree donation from the New Hampshire Arborists Association in memory of Phil French. Seconded by Selectman Torr. 3-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Bonnie Ireland of the Greater Meredith Program presented the planting schedule for Phase I of the tree planting program funded by the Beautification Fund. The first plantings are scheduled for Arbor Day.

- 1 Sunshine and Pa's (elm)
- 2 Community Park (elm)
- 1 Historical Society (pending permission from the owner)
- 10-15 Ippolitos
- 1 Melchor & Prescott
- 1 Village Perk
- 1 Community Center
- 1-2 Meredith Center
- 6 Rte. 25 across from Meredith Village Savings Bank
- 1 Hesky Park

Chair Palm explained that the Beautification Program is funded by voluntary donations from guests checking out of hotels and campgrounds in Meredith. Dialogue ensued regarding who is responsible for the cost of maintaining the trees that will be planted in the public way. The Greater Meredith Program has agreed to maintain the trees as long as it exists, and hopes to set up a reserve fund for future maintenance. Chippers, Inc. is maintaining the trees that were planted in the rotary last year on a voluntary basis. A designation has not been made for maintenance of the new trees. Dialogue ensued regarding the particulars of the plantings.

Resident Jim Hughes expressed a concern with the height and shape of mature elms. They are known to grow 3'-5' in diameter and 30'-50' tall, with a large crown. Unless the plantings are of a smaller variety, he believes the mature trees will be too large for the Community Park on Main Street. Ms. Ireland will investigate the matter and report her findings to the Town Manager prior to the planting of the trees.

The Parks & Recreation Department has asked that the placement of the tent used for summer events in Hesky Park be considered when planting trees in the Park.

The plantings in Scenic Park will be replacements for trees that have reached maturity.

ADJOURNAMENT:

Selectman Worsman motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Torr. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Phillip L. Warren, Town Manager

Charles G. Palm, Chairman

Karin Landry, Recording Clerk

Colette Worsman, Vice Chairman

Nathan J. Torr