

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING**  
**Minutes of 05-03-10**  
**5:30 p.m.**

*Selectmen:*

*Charles G. Palm, Chairman*  
*Colette Worsman, Vice Chairman*  
*(Absent with Notice) 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 -18 Minutes of the April 19, 2010 Workshop and Regular Meeting.**

*Selectman Torr motioned to accept the minutes of the April 19, 2010 Workshop and Regular Meeting. Seconded by Selectman Worsman.*

All corrections that were agreed on prior to this meeting will be included in the signature copy of the April 19 minutes.

*3-0-1. (Selectman Lovett abstained - absent with notice) Motion passed.*

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:**

-SB 492, extending the property tax exemption for telecommunications poles and conduits, was killed. Steps were taken to prevent maneuvers that could be taken by the legislature to include it as an amendment to another bill. The Town Manager extended his thanks to the representatives and senators that voted in favor of killing the bill.

-SB 450 will reduce the rooms and meals tax allocated to municipalities by \$6.1 million. If the bill is passed, the Town would suffer an approximate \$30,000 loss in revenues. The Town Manager will relay the Board's position that the reduction should not be made. The Board has worked hard to cut expenses and balance revenues with expenses, and does not wish to have the state further burden the municipalities.

-There is a bill before the House and Senate that would send funds to local municipalities from a surplus that exists in the LGC Healthtrust. The reimbursement is based on the assertion that communities were overcharged for building reserves through the LGC program. Selectman Lovett cautioned that the funds cannot be anticipated at this time because there is more discussion and legal clarification that needs to take place regarding how the excess funds should be distributed.

-The Town Manager received correspondence addressed to Dr. McCormick and himself from DES Commissioner Burack commending the efforts of the Board, business organizations and groups that partnered in implementing the new turf management program on town owned and school district properties. The efforts to protect the water quality of the lake will be used as a model for other communities and organization, both in the public and private sector. The Town Manager noted that the letter should have been addressed to the Waukegan Watershed Advisory Committee (WWAC), and more particularly, the Lawn Care Subcommittee, for bringing the program to Meredith. Selectman Torr serves on the WWAC, and will relay the letter of commendation and appreciation to both committees.

-Two trees were planted in Community Park on Arbor Day. They were planted in accordance with the recommendations set forth for the Princeton American Elm. A smaller tree was relocated in order to provide for the proper placement of the trees. In addition, a memorial tree was planted in Prescott Park in memory of Phil French, former Tree Warden and arborist who resided in Meredith. The trees and a tasteful monument were placed on behalf of the New Hampshire Arborist Association.

-The Town will lose approximately \$54,247 as of July 1, 2010, unless legislation extends the current education funding transition formula. The Board instructed the Town Manager to develop a letter for their signature expressing displeasure with additional burdens being transferred to municipalities by the state.

-Representatives of Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare, CGI Benefits, and the human resources department will begin informational meetings with employees on Thursday. The Town Manager reiterated that the plan will remain the same, but the carriers will change. There will also be a change in the life insurance carrier. The Town Manager is researching plans and options for workers' compensation insurance.

-A school department meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, at 6:30 p.m. at the elementary school library. The School Board will look at alternatives relative to withdrawal, redistricting, and restructuring. The meeting is open to the public.

#### **VISITOR'S AND RESIDENT'S COMMENTS:**

Resident Jim Hughes suggested that the Board monitor the dissolution of the excess funds in the Health Trust very carefully. His concern is that funds will be distributed only to communities currently covered under LGC health plans, and pointed out that Meredith will not have any coverage under LGC in the near future.

Resident Jim Hughes also expressed his concerns with the monitoring of the level of Lake Waukegan. The lake is very low this year. He explained the process that was used in the past to monitor the level of the Lake in accordance with the wishes of the Town, and is concerned that the Town lost control over monitoring those levels as a result of apathy. In addition, he pointed out that mudflats can be seen in Monkey Pond, which is highly unusual for this time of year.

Selectman Torr serves on the WWAC, and explained the process by which the state monitors the lake level. The level indicator is positioned in the canal behind the Baptist Church. It is monitored via live telemetry directly to the state. Lake levels are adjusted accordingly. The Town lost control of lake levels because of the size of the lake. The Town Manager told the Board that the Dam Bureau is responsible for the monitoring and maintaining of lake levels under

an interim management agreement. Lake levels are to be based on catastrophic events and seasonal flows. The Chair directed that the matter be further explored in an upcoming workshop.

**SELECTMAN'S COMMENTS:**

As a result of recent inquiries from the public, Selectman Lovett explained how the Board processes business. Pending items are assigned as a workshop agenda item, and the required public notice is posted. The "rough edges" are smoothed in the workshop format, where the Board has the opportunity to raise questions and make comments. The matter is then scheduled for the next regular Board meeting, generally two weeks from the date of the workshop. This allows the public ample opportunity to contact the Town Manager's office or Selectmen with questions or comments. At the Board meeting, the matter is briefly reviewed, and there is another opportunity for the Board and public to ask questions and make comments. Subsequently, the Board takes action on the matter. The press is very helpful in getting information out to the public.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**10-19 Metrocast Cable - Cable System Discussion**

Jeff Draepeau, General Manager of Metrocast Cablevision, and Mike Casa, Regional Technical Operations Manager updated the Board on the cost of providing services, and the future of Metrocast as it relates to the Town of Meredith. Rate increases are typically affected once a year. A 30-day notice is provided to every customer. The rate increases are generated at the corporate level and passed down to the local franchises. The local Boards of Selectmen and franchise holders have no authority in the rate setting process. There is no state agency in New Hampshire with direct control over the rates. The rates fall under the jurisdiction of the Federal Communication Commission.

Selectman Worsman asked Mr. Draepeau to speak to service, rates, and programs, and how Metrocast will approach the bidding process with the Board. The franchise agreement expires on December 31, 2012. Metrocast is continually considering input from the individuals and communities they serve, and passing it along to the corporate level. They are always looking at new technology and upgrades. He explained a few of the services recently implemented and some of the new technology on the horizon. Changes are implemented throughout the course of the franchise agreement. Customer service is handled 100% in house, including technical support. New Hampshire is the main hub for technical support and customer service for east coast operations. The company does not anticipate any upgrades that will upset traffic flow during the upcoming tourist season. They are currently up to speed with what is offered in the industry.

Mr. Draepeau provided a service map of the Meredith area. 98.3% of the homes in Meredith are within the service area. Those that are not included in the service area do not meet the parameters that are set forth in the franchise agreement, i.e. ten full time subscribers per mile. Metrocast will provide service to those outside the service area at their cost. The company works with new developments to bring them online.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Chair announced that the Board will reconvene to a workshop at the conclusion of the Board meeting.

*Selectman Worsman moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Lovett. 4-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Phillip L. Warren, Town Manager

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Charles G. Palm , Chairman

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Karin Landry, Recording Clerk

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Colette Worsman, Vice Chairman

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Miller C. Lovett

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Nathan J. Torr