

Director of Administrative Services Brenda Vittner presented the Town Manager's Report:

- The Capital Improvements Committee (CIP) made its recommendations for 2011 this week. The recommendations have been passed along to the Planning Board, and a public hearing will be held at the end of the month. The Board will have an opportunity to review the final recommendations prior to the public meeting.
- An upgrade to the SCADA system at the Water & Sewer building will be included in the 2011 CIP update. The upgrade will be affected in two phases, and will not impact the 2011 budget. The project will be funded with reserves that are set aside and an expendable trust fund for water system improvements. The project will commence once the scope of Phase I is identified.
- Department Heads will be receiving worksheets for the 2011 budget by the end of this week. They must be returned by the middle of the week of October 18.
- The Board meeting scheduled for October 18 will include budget guidance from the Town Manager and a financial update prior to setting the tax rate.
- Water main and hydrant flushing will commence the week of October 18. The work will take place on Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Any concerns should be directed to the Water Department.

VISITOR'S AND RESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

None

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

None

NEW BUSINESS:

10-46 Meredith Public Nursing Request

Ed Touhey addressed the Board on behalf of the Meredith Public Health Nursing Association. He thanked the Board for supporting the Association's building project at the corner of Waukegan and Route 104, which is currently underway. The Association applied for and received a Department of Agriculture mortgage loan guarantee and grant for the construction of the building. The Association is a 501(c) 3 organization that offers healthcare services to all residents of the Town of Meredith. They have been in existence since 1923, and have never turned away an individual who was unable to pay the fee for their services. The Association is requesting a waiver of a building permit fee (\$1,050) and an access fee to connect to water and sewer (\$3,744). The Association will install a meter, and pay all usage fees. Code Enforcement Officer Bill Edney travels by

the property on his way to work, and will not have to make a separate trip to check on the progress of the construction.

Acting Chair Worsman explained that research shows that waivers of these fees have been granted on rare occasions, and only at times when a builder provided a service or made a significant contribution to infrastructure improvements.

Selectman Brothers acknowledges the contributions of the Association to the community at large. In the past, a waiver of access fees has been considered when significant concessions of infrastructure and road improvements that benefit the general public were made, such as the Boynton Rd. housing project. He is concerned with setting precedent in granting the waivers. Access fees are meant to cover the cost of improvements, expansions, and renovations to the water and sewer system. It is critical to collect those fees going forward, especially in light of the fact that there have been no significant fee increases, or money set aside for reserves, for the past 20 years. In addition, the town is a participating community in the Winnepesaukee River Basin Project, and will be assessed for capital improvements that are on the horizon. The town supports the Visiting Nurses Association as an outside agency. Although he is willing to consider waiving the building inspection fee, he respectfully denies the request for the waiver.

Selectman Torr concurs with Selectman Brothers. The organization is currently funded as an outside agency at a substantial rate.

Selectman Lovett is very appreciative of the organization, and acknowledges that the Town benefits from the services they provide. He is aware that the revenue from health insurance and Medicare has been reduced, but knows the organization has received funding from at least one service club in the community. In view of the efforts that have been made to improve the water and sewer system, the timing of the request is not good. He hopes that a successful public fundraising campaign will cover the costs of the access fee and building permit fee.

Resident Jim Hughes supports granting the waiver requests. The Association provides a service to the town, and should be considered differently than a commercial operation such as public housing. He pointed out that recent volunteer efforts have saved the town considerable amounts of money, and this is an opportunity to support an entity that provides a service to the town.

Selectman Brothers suggested that the Association pay the fees on a long-term basis through the loans for the project, and look to the Town, as they have done in the past, for a contribution to their annual budget. He acknowledges that the annual request may increase based on the operating costs of the new facility.

Acting Chair Worsman explained that it is with a heavy heart that the Board denies the request to waive the access fee. Selectman Lovett pointed out that the town supported the Association in the amount of \$72,802 in 2008 and 2009, which is far in excess of the requested waiver.

Mr. Touhey thanked the Board for the sincere thought they gave the decision. He told the Board about the impacts the recession and Medicare funding has had on the Association, and requested that the Board consider waiving the building permit fee separately. The Board acknowledged that the building inspector passes the site on a daily basis, but not granting the waiver might give incentive for larger personal donations.

Selectman Torr motioned to grant the waiver of the building permit fee, but not the water and sewer fee, as proposed.

Selectman Brothers suggested that the motion cite specific amounts.

Selectman Torr motioned to grant the waiver of the building fee in the amount of \$1,050, and deny the waiver of the water and sewer access fee in the amount of \$3,744. 3-1 (Selectman Lovett opposed) Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

10-47 Water and Sewer Rate Proposal

Water System Committee Chair Dave Thorpe made the last presentation on rate proposals before going to public hearing on October 18. The Committee was made aware of a lack of context about how it arrived at decisions regarding various elements in rates at the first public hearing. To address the matter, the Committee extracted talking points from the rules document and set them forth in a document entitled "Water and Sewer Rate Structure Decisions." Copies of the document were made available to the press and public. The Town Manager incorporated the proposed ordinance changes in the word version of the document. The rate table will be on file with the town clerk, and will be removed from that document.

Acting Chair Worsman thanked the committee for its work. The committee is in ongoing discussions regarding a long-range plan once the initial charge has been completely fulfilled. The committee will present a 20-year plan for the water and sewer system in the next couple months. Phase II of the groundwater study is scheduled to be completed by the end of December.

Tools that can be used to explain the proposed rate changes and calculate the effect of the new rates on various categories of users will be posted on line.

Selectman Lovett proposed that in the absence of any objections, the matter go forward to public hearing.

Acting Chair Worsman recited the notice of public hearing:

The Meredith Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on October 18, 2010, 5:40 p.m., at the Meredith Community Center, 1 Circle Drive, Meredith, NH

03253 to consider amendments to the Water and Sewer Use Ordinance and amendments to the water and sewer use rates. A copy of the proposed amendments is available at the town website - www.meredithnh.org - and on file with the Town Clerk. Questions regarding this matter may be directed to Phillip L. Warren, Jr., Town Manager, at pwwarren@meredithnh.org.

The notice will be posted on the website, at Town Hall, and advertised in local papers.

ADJOURNMENT:

Selectman Brothers moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Torr. 4-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda L. Vittner,
Director of Admin. Services

Colette Worsman, Acting Chairman

Peter F. Brothers

Miller C. Lovett

Nathan J. Torr