

SELECTMEN'S WORKSHOP
Minutes of 02-23-09
4:10 p.m.

Selectmen:

Peter F. Brothers, Chairman
Miller C. Lovett, Vice Chairman
Robert C. Flanders
Charles G. Palm
Colette Worsman

Co-Interim Town Managers:

John C. Edgar
Brenda L. Vittner
Karin Landry

Recording Clerk:

Call to Order: Chairman Peter Brothers called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He introduced the Board, Co-Interim Town Managers, and the Recording Clerk.

W-09-09 Town Equipment Discussion – All Departments

During the 2009 budget process, each department was asked to provide updated equipment inventory forms for review. Due to a few inconsistencies, departments were asked to review and update all of the information related to the equipment in their departments including equipment inventories, replacement estimates, surplus equipment, disposition of surplus equipment, and internal philosophy/policy for replacement of equipment. There is no overall Town-wide policy statement for replacing equipment at this time. Because there are no significant equipment purchases in the 2009 Town budget, considerations will have to be made when budgeting for 2010 and each year thereafter. Co-Interim Town Manager Brenda Vittner prepared a summary of fuel purchases by department and vehicle for 2007-2008. She will provide the Board with monthly fuel logs from the Public Works Department with corresponding vehicle logs once they are completed.

Police Department

The 2005 Crown Victoria Cruiser is scheduled for replacement in 2010 and 2011 on the equipment inventory. It should be removed from 2011.

The portable radios acquired with grant money in 1999 are scheduled for replacement beginning in 2010. Since they were acquired, they were updated with a digital system that provides better coverage. They can be further adapted as technology changes. The replacements will be made as the radios break down. They are currently in very good shape. There are 18 radios that will eventually need to be replaced, at a cost of \$3,500 each. The radio batteries must to be replaced annually, at a cost of \$125 each. Selectman Palm suggested setting up a reserve for the purchase of new radios. There was a consensus among the Board that it is worth looking at the prospect of setting up a line item for the equipment. Selectman Worsman suggested that the 2010 might not be the best time to begin doing so.

Two cruisers are scheduled for replacement in 2010. Dialogue ensued regarding establishing an ETF for police vehicles in order to avoid spikes in the operating budget. There are two cruisers listed on the schedule for replacement in 2014. One should be moved to 2013. Funds generated from trading or selling vehicles cannot be placed in a capital reserve account without a Warrant Article.

The boat acquired by the Department in 1999 must be repaired or replaced. It was not new at the time of acquisition. The boat is used by a number of departments including Assessing, Fire, and Code Enforcement.

Dialogue ensued regarding the policy for replacing vehicles. The same rotating schedule for the replacement of vehicles has been in place since John Curran was Chief. There is no written policy. Issues of reliability, maintenance, and responding in a timely manner must be considered once a vehicle approaches 125,000 miles. Older vehicles can be utilized for a few years as unmarked vehicles to extend their life.

Fire Department

Chief Jones did not prepare an equipment philosophy in writing. He will continue with the current schedule unless there is a change in the number of responses that indicates a need for additional equipment.

The Ford 1-Ton used for forestry will not pass inspection next month. It is a 1995 model that was purchased around 2000. The Chief is looking for a replacement truck. Because the purchase of the platform truck was less than expected, there are some funds in the fire truck replacement fund that can be tapped for the purchase. Selectman Worsman suggested getting an estimate for repairs. The Chief was advised by the mechanic that it is no longer cost-effective to keep the vehicle in operating condition. In view of the fact that the Department agreed to forgo funding the fire truck replacement fund for the first four years the fire station is on line, Selectman Worsman is hesitant to propose the purchase of a new truck to the taxpayers.

With the exception of the forestry truck, The Department has the apparatus it needs at this time. There is no written policy for the replacement of equipment. Due to an increase in rescue calls, the Chief scheduled the purchase of a piece of heavy rescue apparatus in 2012 at an approximate cost of \$700,000. Selectman Flanders expressed concerns with all of the rescue equipment being on one vehicle in the event of multiple calls at one time. The Chief pointed out that Lakes Region Mutual Aid is intended to cover those situations. Selectman Lovett expressed concerns with being able to accumulate enough funds in the ETF for the purchase of the heavy rescue by 2012. Although the Town is not in need of a new tanker at this time, the Chief will take advantage a grant that is currently available for a new tanker. There are no assurances that the grant will be allotted. The Department utilizes the police boat to respond to emergency calls near the Bay because the fire boat is located on the other side of Meredith Neck. The recently acquired snow machines were used twice in the last 10 days.

Parks & Recreation

The Department's basic philosophy is to take good care of equipment to make it last as long as possible. Used equipment purchases are made whenever possible.

The Ford Ranger pickup that was acquired from Public Works in 2006 is scheduled for potential replacement in 2012. The Department shares equipment with other Departments whenever possible, but hopes to replace the vehicle with a dump body that will aid in projects such as snow removal at the community center in a more efficient manner.

Department of Public Works

The Interlakes School District is interested in trading the Town's 1990 Ford F350 bucket truck for the District's 1986 Yanmar tractor. The Town purchased a newer tractor in 2008 and does not have the storage space for another tractor. There was a consensus among the Board that trading the two pieces of equipment is not beneficial for the Town. The resale value of the bucket truck is approximately \$1,500 - \$2,000. Dialogue ensued regarding the costs associated with transporting the truck for auction. Selectman Flanders suggested negotiating a fair price with the School District for the bucket truck. Ms. Vittner will contact the School District.

Dialogue ensued regarding the equipment utilized by the Public Works department. There are 12 drivers utilizing plow trucks at any one time during a snow storm. The Department trades equipment with other Departments whenever possible. Surplus items are taken to auction or go out to bid. The Board reviewed the Department's list of equipment. Discrepancies in the inventory list prompted Selectman Flanders to express concerns with the accuracy of the list. The Department is considering adapting a 1977 wagon acquired from the Water Department so it can be used to steam culverts. Dialogue ensued regarding the value of the four items on the surplus list. Selectman Worsman suggested waiting until the scrap price goes up to dispose of the sander, which has very little value as a used piece of equipment.

Al Bolduc answered various questions posed by the Board. All the chain saws listed on the inventory are utilized. There are ten dump trucks, three F350's, one F250, and twelve drivers. One of the spare trucks is utilized during emergencies and one is dedicated to the Buildings & Grounds cemetery division.

Selectman Flanders reiterated that he believes that the line item for the replacement of truck tires is substantially over-budgeted. If the Board must revisit the budget to find additional economies, he suggests starting with that line item.

At 5:25 p.m., Selectman Flanders motioned to reconvene the Workshop after the Regular Board meeting. Seconded by Selectman Worsman. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

The Workshop was reconvened at 7:15 p.m.

09-11 Miscellaneous Action Items

Belknap County Economic Development Corp.

Former Town Manager Carol Granfield served as the Town's representative on the Belknap County Economic Development Corp. The Board must identify a replacement. Dialogue ensued regarding the work of the organization and the time commitment associated with serving as an incorporator. Selectman Lovett expressed an interest in filling the position. There was a consensus among the Board that Selectman Lovett should fill the position until such time as the new Town Administrator can take over.

W09-12 Inter-Municipal Agreement Discussion

The Planning Department has conditionally approved a proposal for a 12,000 square foot retail building in a commercial zone located on Route 3. Co-Interim Town Manager John Edgar used visual aids to set forth the exact location of the proposed development. The proposal includes extending the sewer approximately 300' in Laconia, and 150' into Meredith to serve the property. As a condition of approval, the Planning Board asked for concurrence from the Board of Selectmen and the City of Laconia as to the terms and conditions of an agreement extending the sewer from one town to another to serve properties located in Meredith. There are approximately six undeveloped or underdeveloped properties in Meredith that would benefit from the extension of the sewer. The extension of the system would benefit the water quality in the Bay. The Laconia City Council approved the extension a year or two ago. The City will assess the developer a recovery fee for the booster station based on their formula. The capital recovery represents a bigger incentive than the increased costs associated with processing additional affluent associated with the extension of the sewer. The developer will be a customer of the Laconia Sewer Department.

The project will be broken into two phases. Phase I includes the initial sewer connection. Phase II will include any additional connections or physically extending the line, which would trigger Meredith's ownership from the Town line. This would not be a burden to Meredith's utilities. The Town can make assumptions of an increased tax base as a result of the sewer extension. Town Planner Angela LaBrecque is investigating the details of the Public Utilities Commission process that the Town needs to go through. The Town will seek legal advice regarding the agreement and the avenues available to the Town if the sewer bill is not paid by the developer.

A subsequent Workshop will be held to address the matter. Mr. Edgar wishes to have most of the issues resolved at that time. He will investigate how much additional capacity the Laconia system can handle, how property liens would work under either Phase, the wording of the agreements, and a better understanding of the methodology for recovery. Selectman Flanders is not in favor of signing any agreements until Phase II is clearly laid out and understood by all. Any comments or questions should be forwarded to the Chair.

Selectman Flanders motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Worsman. 5-0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

John C. Edgar, Co-Interim Town Mgr.

Peter F. Brothers, Chairman

Brenda L. Vittner, Co-Interim Town Mgr.

Miller C. Lovett, Vice Chairman

Karin Landry, Recording Clerk

Robert C. Flanders

Charles G. Palm

Colette Worsman

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