

• **May 4, 2006**

Present: Selectmen Nicholas N. Solley, Mark E. Lyon.

Public: Charles LaMuniere, Tony Bedini, Frank Adams, Mark Picton, David Owen, Valerie Friedman, Valerie Andersen, Janet Wildman, Linda McGarr.

Minutes:

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the April 20, 2006 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen. By Nick Solley, seconded by Mark Lyon and unanimously approved.

Visitors:

- **Charles LaMuniere and Tony Bedini**, Inland Wetlands Commissioners, began the discussion by referring to the written "informational note" they had submitted to the Selectmen (copy attached to Selectmen's copy of these minutes) regarding their request to have the Zoning and Wetlands Enforcement Officer's hours increased. Mark Picton, IW Chairman, voiced his endorsement of their request. David Owen, Zoning Chairman, also voiced his support. Some of the key points made in support of the increased hours were:

The need for more enforcement capabilities - there are more applications, issues more complicated;

The need to follow up on violations;

The need for more preparation/review prior to meetings-advising applicants what is needed, site-reviews, etc. making meeting time more efficient;

Cost effectiveness for the Town (decrease in legal fees);

The need for more monitoring after applications are processed-higher rate of compliance.

The Selectmen explained that their hope was to keep budget figures in check by starting with a receptionist for the Land Use offices - taking more of a work burden off of Mike Ajello and Janet Hill. Those commissioners present expressed their appreciation but felt it would not be enough. Tony and Charles were advised by the Board of Finance to come to the Selectmen first with their request as this increase in the enforcement officer's hours would make a significant difference in the budget figures for 2006-2007. Both Nick Solley and Mark Lyon explained that the Selectmen are approached by all the departments and commissions with requests and obviously they cannot all be approved. All visitors in attendance at this meeting voiced their strong support of this particular request. As the Town's Budget Hearing is this evening, Tony, Charles and others were advised to present their case to the Board of Finance and public. The Selectmen advised they would not oppose this request and that the argument presented was very convincing.

Communications:

- **Email from Valerie Andersen re: Town Meeting times:** The current ordinance only establishes the time of the Annual Town Meeting in October. Valerie Andersen made the argument that all Town Meetings - Regular and Special - should be held "no earlier than 7:00p.m." so that more people would be able to attend. Nick Solley explained there may be times when a special meeting has to be held (i.e. to have an agreement signed, etc.) and he would not want the Selectmen restricted. Valerie agreed there

may be "emergencies" but felt, for the most part, the evening hours would work. After discussion, it was agreed to put this on the May 18th Town Meeting agenda as an amendment to the current ordinance.

Appointments/Resignations: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Building Permit Fees:** Nick and Mark referred to the discussion held at the last Selectmen's meeting - agreeing on the first "proposed" increase to \$30 for the "1st \$1000 value or minimum fee" and after discussion today agreed to increase the "each additional \$1000 value or part thereof" to \$9.00. This will be placed on the May 18th Town Meeting agenda.
- **Electronic Bill Paying for Taxpayers:** At the last Selectmen's meeting it was decided to approve this option pending favorable recommendations from current users. Tanya Wescott, Tax Collector, has contacted a few of the Towns currently using or who have approved to use it and has received no negative comments. **Motion:** To provide electronic bill paying for taxpayers through the website. By Mark Lyon, seconded by Nick Solley and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Proposed Change to Tax Relief Program for Elderly & Disabled Homeowners**
Ordinance: Barbara Johnson, Assessor, has submitted to the Selectmen, a rationale for suggested changes to the ordinance. Basically the changes would bring our ordinance in line with the State method of when to apply and the time period for calculating the total amount of relief allowed. Selectmen were in agreement to have this placed on the May 18th Town Meeting agenda.
- **Set the Agenda for the May 18, 2006 Town Meeting:** **Motion:** To set the agenda for the May 18th, 2006 Town Meeting as follows:
 1. To approve the proposed General Fund Expenses in the amount of \$3,650,320 for the 2006-2007 fiscal year.
 2. To approve the proposed Nonrecurring Capital Expenses in the amount of \$927,050 (net) for the 2006-2007 fiscal year.
 3. To approve an expenditure from the 2005-2006 General Fund in the amount of \$83,000 to the Town of Washington Pension Fund.
 4. To amend Town Ordinance #107 specifying the time of the October Annual meeting be 7:30p.m. and establishing that all Town meetings, regular and/or special, be held at 7:30p.m. unless there is a specific emergency requiring their being held at another time.
 5. To amend the Town Ordinance establishing the Building fees for the Town of Washington to increase the permit fee for 1) 1st \$1000 value or minimum fee from \$20 to \$30, and 2) each additional \$1000 value or part thereof from \$6 to \$9.
 6. To amend the Ordinance "Tax Relief for Elderly and Disabled Homeowners" under **Applications** to delete the words "of each year" and to add "Applicants who qualify for the State program may reapply biennially for both programs."; and under **Total Tax Relief Allowed, Section F**, change "July" to "October."

By Mark Lyon, seconded by Nick Solley and unanimously approved.

Adjournment:

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:10p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Nick Solley, seconded by Mark Lyon and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Greene

Selectmen's Secretary