

December 19, 2005

Chairman Michael Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present:

Board: Jack Boyer, Barbara Brown, Jack Field, Michael Jackson, and Rex Swain

Alternates: Liddy Adams and John Allen

Selectmen: Richard Sears, Nicholas Solley

Alternate Liddy Adams was seated in the absence of Craig Schoon.

Minutes: Minutes of the November 21st meeting were accepted as submitted.

Treasurers Report: Report accepted as submitted. It was noted a transfer has been made from the Capital Fund to establish the Open Space Fund. Housing funds remains in the Nonrecurring Capital Account.

Tax Collectors Report: Report accepted as submitted. Jack Boyer questioned a comment in the audit regarding a decrease in property taxes over the prior year (p. 10). Further explanation will be sought from the auditor.

Guests:

Depot Study Report: Planning Commission Chairman Adelaide Roberts reported the Depot Study Report will be circulated among the town commissions for comment. She hoped this would assist the Planning Commission on how to proceed. They are endeavoring to have everyone fully understand what the Study is about and to clear up misconceptions. Comments should be directed to the Planning Commission.

Financials: Accepted as submitted.

Education Steering Committee: Jack Field reported introductory information is being presented in the three towns. This includes costs associated with the various options. Few complications appear regarding the Consolidated concept. However, it has been recommended that consideration be given at this time to replacing the high school track as the septic system for this plan could require it be situated under the track. At the Washington Primary School a portion of the gym may be used for a meeting and lunch room. The financial difference in a new consolidated school and three improved schools would be \$10-15,000,000 net to the towns. Future costs would also be reduced with a consolidated school. Jack and Michael feel that the S/L/A/M Collaborative has been of great assistance to the Steering Committee. Jack was commended on his efforts. He strongly recommended that all residents attend the meetings to discuss the projects in depth.

Pension: Rex reported it is the unanimous recommendation of the Pension Committee that the Town fully fund the Pension obligation as soon as possible. Approximately \$87,000 is needed to complete this funding, \$30,000 in net obligations from prior years and \$57,000 for this year due to changes in interest and salary assumptions. The Board discussed possible reasons for this large increase. Michael suggested delaying the deposit until he has a better understanding of the reasons for the increase. He will discuss this with Pension Consultants. The Committee also recommended the Selectmen plan for a contribution of approximately \$126,000 in the coming budget cycle. Prior overtime and private duty expenses will be available for the next meeting. Terms of the Plan regarding these and other items will be reviewed. A town meeting will be required to approve the additional funding.

Alternate Appointment: The Board has requested recommendations from the Republican Town Committee for the vacancy in the position of alternate. Jim Brinton, Doug Greene and Joan Lodsins were recommended. Since many of the Board members are not acquainted with Joan, she will be asked to attend their next meeting scheduled for January 27th.

Meeting Dates for 2006 were approved. (attached)

Selectmans Report:

Cell Tower: Dick reported he has received communication from Verizon regarding the possible leasing of the New Preston firehouse to locate a cell phone tower. The monthly fee offered is \$1,800. The Selectmen will begin discussion of the various pros and cons at a future meeting.

Health District: Dick reported the State is mandating each town have a full-time health district and are promoting that all towns join health districts. Currently, the Town contracts for these services through the Town of New Milford. The State will provide a \$5,000 grant as an incentive to join a district. Dick is reviewing an offer from New Milford, as well as other area districts. He will report his findings at a later date.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Gollow
Secretary