

**Lincoln Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2008
5:00 pm**

Present: Chairman Peter Moore, Selectman Deanna Huot, Selectman Patricia McTeague,
Town Manager Peter Joseph, Administrative Assistant Susan Chenard
Audience members: Lynn Wheeler, Charlie Cook, WT Bishop

Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 5:10 pm.

Routine Business

- **Approval of public meeting minutes of September 15, 2008** - A motion was made by Selectman McTeague, seconded by Chairman Moore, to approve the public meeting minutes of September 15, 2008, as amended. The vote was unanimous.
- **Audience** – Lynn Wheeler, who was sitting in the audience, asked to introduce herself. She is running for Grafton County Registrar of Deeds, and distributed her pamphlet. She has been around the registry for 35 years, seven of them as an employee. She is now a title abstractor with a background in real estate law and town government, as a chairman of her local Board of Selectmen. When asked about a floor proposal to eliminate municipal recording fees, she explained that if the Town didn't pay per item, it would end up paying those costs in county taxes.
- **Charity Tax Exemption Procedure Review** – Town Manager Joseph distributed and reviewed with the Selectmen a checklist for charitable exemption qualification, and copies of case law and statute on this subject (Chapters 32 and 37, based on RSA 72:23). Annually two documents should be filed – BTLA A9 and A12. Chairman Moore asked the Town Manager to forward this information to Rick Kelley and the Board of the North Country Center for the Arts as well. Town Manager Joseph was involved in this process with an entity in Peterborough recently, so knows this subject well. He explained that it is important to have standardized forms to base decisions on, and that this checklist could be adapted for Lincoln.
- **Review of Draft Budget Schedule** – Town Manager Joseph said he will be preparing for the upcoming budget season a little differently this year, by having meetings with each department head and going through their budget individually, with a Selectman, most likely Selectman Huot, present. He asked if anyone besides staff needed to be present, like for the community building, etc. but Selectmen Huot felt that would not be necessary. She will be out of town in later October, so some meeting dates were rescheduled to fit between her and Finance Director Helen Jones' vacation schedules. The changes still leave a few weeks to fine-tune, before the draft budgets are submitted to Charlie Cook by Thanksgiving for the budget committee procedure.
- **New Hampshire Retirement System Rates update** – Not surprisingly, the rates for the New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS) went up. The Town Manager explained that NHRS has had financial issues. They were supposed to pay

pensions from investment interest, but the fund has been shrinking and many people are set to retire in the next 10 years. So he expects there will be the same issues as there are with Social Security. The NHRS board has recently acquired more financial expertise, but contributions for fire and police are going up exponentially due to union lobbying. The Town portion increases, not the employees', but the cost gets passed on to the taxpayers. The total employer percentage for regular employees will go from about 8% to 9.09% by 2009, while fire, police and teachers have larger increases. The Town Manager sees larger increases on the horizon, and wants us to say something to our legislators to let them know we have issues with these increases. He is setting up a meeting of local legislators for later this fall. He doesn't want to see a reduction in benefits, but feels NHRS really needs to fix the nest egg in the retirement system account.

- **Police Chief's Report** – Chief Smith stopped in to report that the Highland Games event went very well, and the organizers were very happy. Attendance was down about 10% on Friday and Saturday, and about 30% on Sunday, but this was expected. Other events around the State and country, including the races at Loudon, were down too. The Chief said the new electronic sign worked very well, and he will write up information for the department heads to potentially let them use it to promote events. He recently attended a health officer meeting where they discussed setting up a North Country event for this area's managers to distribute information on home heating help, etc. Chairman Moore had concerns about using the sign on Main Street, as it could be distracting, so the Chief explained that the sign can be taken apart to be just a post and flasher for speeding. Chairman Moore asked that any requests to use the electronic messaging board go through the Town Manager to keep its usage under control, due to the new sign ordinance. Selectman Huot asked if any accidents had occurred due to the new striping, but Chief Smith said there had just been some near misses as people get used to it. WT Bishop asked about putting the police log on the police website, but the Chief thinks it would need different software, and needs much editing for confidentiality, which could mean a lot of staff time. Chairman Moore felt that meeting the minimum requirements for availability of this public information is adequate. Currently, people just need to come down to the police department and ask for the information, and have it within 7 days or less for review.

- **Town Manager's Report** –

- The sign trailer will be parked in the impound area under video surveillance, and the trailer hitch can be removed and wheels locked, as theft deterrents.
- A recent state park audit cited Cannon Mountain multiple times for internal control problems, lack of checks and balances, sloppy accounting to the point that the mountain wouldn't realize when things were stolen, etc. Another bill to privatize the mountain may be submitted to legislature.
- The Grafton County delegation meeting is tentatively set for October 20th, 2008. Edmond Gionet will try to come, and we are waiting to hear from Representative Sorg, Commissioner Burton, the county commissioner, etc. Town Manager Joseph would like this to be an annual update of county operations and the jail project. He and the Board are hoping for a good, non-confrontational dialogue.

- The bond discussed at the last meeting was the retirement of the principal from one year of a \$3 million water & sewer upgrade bond.
- The appraisal for the Common Man town lot is in. Is the Board now ready to do the RSA 41:14-a procedure? The appraisal came to \$85,000 as a residential lot with the highest and best use. He did a very thorough job, taking into account the operating restaurant next door. It is an open market exchange, so if someone else offered more, the Board of Selectmen would need to look at that. Chairman Moore asked that we make sure the Common Man understands the procedures of RSA 41:14-a, and polled the Board, who were all in favor of moving forward.
- The listings for the Business Park lots expire on September 30th, 2008. The Board felt it was a tough property to sell in a tough market. The Realtor wants to continue the listing, has created a good, easily accessible website on it, etc. and the Board is in favor of re-listing with them. They would like a 1-year extension at this time, although the original listing was for 2 years.

Other Business

Town Manager Joseph distributed a draft Purchase and Sale agreement for the White Water Treatment Plant parcel, to be reviewed by the Board of Selectmen for content. A copy is also being sent to our council for legal review.

Town Clerk Susan Whitman came to see the Town Manager today and is considering an increase from \$2 to \$3 for car registration municipal agent fees. This is the only money we make for doing registrations here, rather than out of town, and would amount to an additional \$2000 or so. The Selectmen are in favor of the increase. These fees go into the general fund as our town clerk receives a salary here.

Selectman Huot asked if the day camp gets discounts on the Children's Theater tickets. The Town Manager will check with Recreation Director Tower, but hasn't had a chance to talk to her.

Selectman Huot asked if anyone had made complaints regarding construction noise this summer, but neither the Town Manager nor Administrative Assistant Chenard had heard anything.

This Thursday, September 25th, is a budget class at the Mountain Club, which Selectman Huot will be attending. She asked Town Manager Joseph to go to the community center meeting at 8am in her place, as he had attended the budget class last year.

Selectman McTeague asked if the Board was still meeting with Woodstock regarding the solid waste audit on September 30th. Yes, Sandy Dvholuk had confirmed this for 6pm. Chairman Moore said he spoke with James Steele, who will provide information to review this week.

Next Monday, September 29th, is the videoconference at LinWood School at 6pm, so the Selectmen's meeting will be short, from about 5:00pm to 5:30pm.

Selectman McTeague will not be able to attend the North Country Council annual meeting and dinner on October 9th, but suggested Administrative Assistant Chenard go in her place.

Town Manager Joseph has spoken with a few members of the outstanding tax group and feels we should be receiving about half of the \$500,000 before the next tax bill goes out. Chairman Moore reminded everyone that **Hazardous Waste Day is September 27th**. It is posted on the Town website and Channel 3. Selectman McTeague felt this would make

a good message for the electronic sign. The Chairman noted that the cost/benefit was important, and that we need enough waste brought in to make it make sense.

Chairman Moore asked the Town Manager about the status of the letters to the Lincoln Green owners and to sign violators. Town Manager Joseph said both drafts are almost done and the letters will be going out soon.

Selectman Huot noted that the telephone pole on Bern Dibner Drive had already been put up, before the Selectmen signed the petition. It is between two that are already up, and the Board was fine with this.

Chairman Moore asked about the status of the Business Park lot potential offer, and Town Manager Joseph said that he is working with Mark Scarano at GCEDC on this. Town Manager Joseph mentioned that the rest of the survey pins need to be set at the Business Park in order to complete the deed write-ups. The surveyor said the contractor had asked for a pause until the infrastructure was complete, and that the contractor was to pay the surveyor. We need to make sure the pins are complete in order to transfer any property.

Chairman Moore asked about the process regarding work on the community center addition, as he is trying to get cost information for the library addition. He has completed plans so far, so it is now time to bid it out, so they can appropriate the right amount.

Town Manager Joseph said he will be looking for an outside engineering firm to review the InnSeasons conceptual plans, as Hoyle, Tanner, Associates (HTA) is their engineer. We probably won't use Horizons Engineering, but more likely some company from the Concord area. The Town Manager is working with planning Board Chairman Romprey on this and is checking with some firms.

Public Participation

Charlie Cook asked when the tax rate would be set, which is usually in early to middle October. He wondered if Selectman Huot would be available, due to her vacation. The Town Manager will need to touch base with Jamie Dow of the DRA to ensure this.

Mr. Cook suggested writing a warrant article on the handling of the retirement fund by NHRS, and see if the municipal association would ask all Towns to do the same, to get a sense of the towns calling for responsibility by NHRS. If the right people aren't at the meetings in Concord, maybe this would tell them better, and this would send a message to the governor. There would be no cost to the article, but it would give the Selectmen or Town Manager a chance to explain the situation at Town Meeting.

Mr. Cook felt we should be very judicious in the use of the electronic sign board, as it is in conflict with the newly written sign ordinance and would set a bad example for the Town to break the ordinance first. Chairman Moore agrees.

Regarding the Common Man parcel, Mr. Cook doesn't think there is an obligation to sell to highest bidder. If someone were to bid more, causing Mr. Ray to not build his inn, and potentially close his restaurant, it would cost the Town in the long run. Chairman Moore agreed that highest and best use for the Town makes more sense.

Mr. Cook asked that the addition to the library be over-insulated. The cost of heat won't be going down, so the library should invest in good windows, proper roof ventilation, etc. Finally, Mr. Cook suggested updating the flags in the meeting room.

Mr. Bishop asked about the library energy audit, and if they would be insulating based on that, which they would. He asked about the kind of heating currently in place, which is a

modern propane system, about 10 years old. There is no cellar in the expansion, but it has frost walls. Mr. Bishop pointed out that the library would need 3 bids at a minimum. Mr. Bishop asked if we were working on a small municipalities separate storm water permit. He mentioned that he will be attending a conference at Loon Mountain on October 25th, and one program was titled “wading through water protection”. He will bring back information from it. Town Manager Joseph mentioned that there are brochures by Planning Administrative Assistant Boyce’s window regarding the CSPA. Finally, Mr. Bishop suggested telling Representative Gionet about our thoughts on the NHRS.

At 7:08 pm, the meeting was adjourned and the Board of Selectmen reviewed payroll and accounts payable check registers for the week ending September 21, 2008.

Date: _____

Approved by:

Chairman Peter Moore

Selectman Deanna Huot

Selectman Patricia McTeague