

Lincoln Board of Selectmen – Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2009 – 5:00 pm

Present: Selectman Deanna Huot, Selectman Patricia McTeague, Town Manager Peter Joseph and Administrative Assistant Susan Chenard

Audience: North Country Council Executive Director Michael King, Planning Board Chairman Pat Romprey and Zoning Board Chairman Joseph Chenard

Selectman Huot called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

Routine Business

- **Approval of the Public Meeting Minutes of April 20, 2009** – The approval of the meeting minutes of April 20, 2009 was postponed as only one Selectman that was present at that meeting was present this evening.
- **Acceptance of \$5,000 from Plus Time NH for licensing of after school program at the Community Center** – PlusTime NH awarded the Lincoln-Woodstock Recreation Department \$5,000 for completing all steps and licensing the after school program. Although these steps were required, it is seen as an encouragement to other similar facilities. The award will go into the general fund to offset program costs.
- **North Country Council Update by Executive Director, Michael King** – As head of our regional planning council, Mr. King visits the various Select and Planning Boards in his region on a regular basis to update them on North Country Council activities and opportunities. He distributed folders containing annual reports, standing committee lists and other information, highlighting that the Council provides many planning services, some at no charge. For example, they did the master plan for the Town of Lincoln, are working with us now to update our all-hazards plan, and have worked with a local developer on a Brownfield study. Town Manager Joseph is on the North Country Council Board, and Joe Chenard and Tom Smith are Lincoln's representatives on various council committees.

North Country Council also worked with the Town to create our Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and Selectman Huot expressed the Town's appreciation for this valuable planning tool. Selectman McTeague suggested that the North Country Council (NCC) work with the Grafton County administration to create a CIP as well. Mr. King said he would talk to Commissioner Burton about it when he sees him next and offer assistance in creating a CIP for the County. Mr. King noted that NCC was asked to create a master plan for the county complex 3-4 years ago, but that this didn't work out as he had hoped for, citing departmental issues.

Mr. Romprey asked if any money was available to get regular railroad service back in operation between here and Concord or Boston. Mr. King said there was not much yet, but rail is being looked at more in the current economy. He felt that Lincoln's rail service was very recreational, but that transit/commercial use would be more likely. Mr. Romprey felt freight service would be useful as well. Mr. King is working on a project further north, on the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail which connects the Maritimes with the Montreal area of Canada. The railroad bed

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needs updates, costing about \$10 million for about 20 miles. He will also be working on connecting Concord with Boston by rail, as a member of the rail authority, and admitted there is a cry throughout the country to upgrade rail service for freight and transit. Town Manager Joseph thought that there was a speed limit of about 15 mph from here to Meredith or so, as our rail system was built some time ago and has been recently only been used for recreational riding.

Mr. King noted that stimulus funding has been used for a plant to convert landfill methane to energy savings in Berlin, to save a bank in Colebrook, and hopefully soon to create a telecommunications backbone up Route 93. Fairpoint is working on something similar via Vermont, then over to Littleton and north, but redundancy is important. Regarding funding for starting light industry and manufacturing, he noted that the White Mountains Community College is doing an incubator project in Berlin. For equipment, emergency management funds could be available for things like fire fighting equipment, while funding for emergency generators is more likely to come from grants. The Town Manager felt that grants only made available for unplanned equipment expenditures was almost a reward for lack of planning. We had tried to use stimulus funding for planned projects, but were unable to qualify for most of the projects.

Selectman Huot asked if any stimulus funding was available for affordable and elderly housing. Mr. King said this had been funneled mainly towards CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) via the CDFA (Community Development Funding Authority). Joe Chenard mentioned that the State owns roughly 1800-2000 acres west of Route 3, which was surplus land after putting in the highway. He suggested the State could give us that land back to use for affordable and elderly housing. Access could be via Hanson Farm Road at Georgianna Falls. Mr. Romprey noted a large aquifer there, and Mr. Chenard described the land as level, with a pretty brook running through it. The Town Manager agreed and said you could see the land from the top of Indian Head. Mr. King noted that Dan Woods at AHEAD would be a very good contact for the rent controlled housing as well, but said he would check into this land issue for us, and he will keep in mind that housing is an issue here in Lincoln.

There was a short conversation about the Lincoln industrial park, and that it was now off to a slow start, though the first lots had recently been transferred. Mr. King also asked about the solid waste facility study, and the Board felt that it was good to have the facts back up that people are happy and things are well run there. Mr. King left around 6:00 pm.

➤ **Town Manager's report**

1. Community Building grant update – Recreation Director Tara Tower is confident that we will be receiving this grant. However, we are required to have lead paint testing done, particularly around the windows, since the Community Center building was built in the mid-1970's. This will cost a few hundred dollars, and if

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any lead paint is present, proper precautions will need to be made when we replace the windows.

2. Grafton County jail update – On Thursday, Town Manager Joseph attended a Grafton County Commissioner's meeting to review the changes in the jail proposal. The jail was redesigned and reduced in size, beds and cost. The revised plans are available in the Town Manager's office. The \$32.8 million includes all costs, except heat, as they are looking at district-system heating. Some other design changes allow for future expansion and reduction of personnel. There was discussion of the Sullivan County jail, where a three-phase approach with only the first third of the term spent fully in the facility, then work release, and finally ankle bracelet release has let the costs be reduced considerably. The Selectmen and audience felt that ankle-bracelet release was also a way to prevent lighter offenders from developing bad habits in a mixed facility. The timeframe for the project, once past this fall's Supreme Court decision and a new bond vote, would be 18-24 months, once construction begins.
3. Forest Fire Trailer – The US Forest Service has offered the Town the use of a surplus forest fire trailer at no charge. We do need to insure it, keep it inside, keep it appropriately stickered, keep it maintained and return it if we no longer want or need it. The Selectmen approved the Town Manager signing the agreement.
4. State land sale – The State will be selling a small parcel of land to David Dixon, at the corner of Liberty Road and Route 3. By law the Town has the first right of refusal in purchasing the property, but the Selectmen did not want to pursue that. Joe Chenard mentioned that we would need an easement for Town water and sewer lines that run under that property and the Selectmen directed Town Manager Joseph to make sure this was included.
5. Cartographic Associates is willing to do the Public Works Information management System data collection this summer for \$20,500, which is what we have available in the Engineering and Planning Capital Reserve Fund this year. The Board members approved of this plan of action.
6. The North Country Center for the Arts (NCCA) draft deeds have been reviewed by Town counsel, Geoff Lewis, who noted 4 points of which the Town Manager and Selectmen should be aware. There was discussion of the Town being a junior lien holder to the bank, so that the bank gets the property in case of foreclosure. The capital investment amount should be the value at the point of Certificate of Occupancy, if the Town wanted to repurchase the land. NCCA would prefer a vehicular Right of Way, but not an underground one for utilities, which we could do on the adjoining parcel of Town-owned land. Town Manager Joseph will work on point one and come back to the Selectmen at a future meeting with revisions.

Other business

- We are planning to send out tax bills by about mid-May.
- The school has agreed to let us defer \$175,000 of the next 2 payments until July.
- We have not borrowed from ourselves yet, and will be receiving over \$70,000 tomorrow from one taxpayer. We are still waiting on Forest Ridge and InnSeasons, among others.
- DES has posted an administrative order for Forest Ridge to fix a dam on their property, and sent us a copy.

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- Town Manager Joseph gave Selectman McTeague information on village districting, as had been discussed for the Beechwood homeowners. Creating a district must be petitioned by the registered voters in that district. This would allow them to maintain their roads themselves, after we work with them and Loon to get them back to reasonable condition. No Town Meeting vote is required; just a certification from the Board of Selectmen.
- The Primex health insurance agreement is ready to be signed. We had budgeted for this and said we would stay with them this upcoming plan year. However, we received a quote from LGC very recently, which would be slightly less per month, but for a somewhat different plan. We will stay with Primex for now, and make sure that both quote their best rates for budget season in October/November, not in May.

Audience Participation

There was none at this time.

At 7:07 pm, the meeting was adjourned and the Board of Selectmen reviewed payroll and accounts payable check registers for the week ending May 3, 2009.

Date: _____

Approved by:

_____(not present)_____
Chairman Peter Moore

Selectman Deanna Huot

Selectman Patricia McTeague