

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JANUARY 9, 2006
REGULAR SESSION
“APPROVED”**

Present: George F. Dillon, Jr., Chair; John L. Saball, Vice Chair; Robert W. Nordblom, Clerk; Peter S. Cunningham, Member; Mihran Keoseian, Member; Administrative Officer Jean E. Kitchen; and Kathleen Newell, Office Assistant.

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m.

Adopt-A-Road Guidelines

Mr. John MacLeod and Ms. Janine Doucette of the Sign Committee were present for this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Kitchen stated that an Eagle Scout had started the Adopt-A-Road program and now once a year certain groups have adopted portions of roadways. Ms. Doucette stated that the Sign Committee had placed the Adopt-A-Road signs under the Highway Department. Mr. MacLeod read a letter from Andy Fields and stated that there needed to be a process and he suggested that the Sign Committee be circumvented and that the Town should handle the requests and permitting. Ms. Doucette stated that the current by law was confusing as there are no clear definitions. Mr. Dillon asked if there were any suggestions. Mr. MacLeod stated that there would need to be another by-law with definitions and a map. Mr. MacLeod asked who would “own” the process, the Sign Committee, HDC or the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Dillon stated that the Board would be responsible for assigning volunteer groups to clean up portions of specified roadways and based upon location it would fall under the HDC or Sign Committee’s purview.

Mr. Dillon noted that this issue had generated resident input and he would like to have another meeting to address the process.

Employee Recognition – Leroy Johnson – Library – 20 Years

Mr. Leroy Johnson, Ms. Owen Smith Shuman and members of the Library were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Dillon thanked Mr. Johnson for his dedication and service to the Town and presented him with a 20 year pin.

Friends of Fitch’s Bridge Committee RE: Award Fitch’s Bridge Proposal

Mr. Ray Ciemney was present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Ciemney stated that the Fitch’s Bridge Committee had met previously in the day to review presentations from the bidders. Ms. Kitchen stated that there were factors of the RFP which the Committee rated.

Mr. Keoseian asked for a summary of qualifications. Mr. Ciemney stated that Mr. Chilcoat had met with them and checked their references, which had revealed they had a lot of experience in Massachusetts.

Ms. Kitchen noted that one of the top two firms had not specified in the RFP a price for the 2nd Phase.

Mr. Cunningham asked what the timeline was for making the decision. Mr. Ciemney stated that there was a need to have a 20% design by February 1st. Mr. Cunningham asked when Aumann Whitney needed to know by. Mr. Ciemney stated the following day.

Mr. Cunningham asked if there was one factor that tipped the decision. Mr. Ciemney stated that the other submission was incomplete, and the presentation did not cover the abutments and there were some anomalies.

Mr. Ciemney stated that the Committee had chosen the firm of Aumann Whitney.

Library Trustees RE: New Young Adult Librarian Position and Long Range Plan

Library Director Owen Shuman was present for this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Shuman reviewed a handout (enclosed herein) for justification of the Young Adult Librarian position.

Mr. Keoseian asked if the current staffing had been reviewed to see if there could be a reconfiguration of current staff to cover the needs of the young adults. Ms. Shuman reviewed the Library configuration and the minimum required staffing per floor.

Ms. Shuman reviewed the state requirements for the percentage of the budget which must be spent on books and the results of a web poll for the greatest areas of need of the Library. Ms. Shuman reviewed the five-year goals which are increased use and ease of use; service the under served or those not currently being served; improve customer service, access to resources; and improve local history collection.

Chief Mulhern RE: Reserve Officer Appointment

Chief Robert Mulhern and Officer Kellie Ann Barhight were present for this portion of the meeting.

Chief Mulhern reviewed Officer Barhight's qualifications and stated that she would be an excellent addition to the Town's Police force.

Mr. Saball moved to appoint Kellie Ann Barhight as a Reserve Patrol Officer for the term to expire June 30, 2006, effective January 10, 2006. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

Chief Mulhern & Highway Surveyor Tom Delaney RE: Blossom Lane One-Way Review

Mr. Dillon stated that it had been suggested that there be a review of the change in Traffic Pattern of Blossom Way after 120 days.

Mr. Delaney stated that the change appeared to working well and there had been no complaints.

Chief Mulhern stated that a review had been conducted and there were only a few issues in the first few days of the change. Chief Mulhern stated that it had been a very positive change and he felt that the change of traffic flow on Martins Pond Road should begin.

Mr. Saball moved to permanently make Blossom Lane a one-way street flowing east from Hollis Street to Martins Pond Road. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

Highway Surveyor Tom Delaney RE: New Laborer Positions

Mr. Delaney stated that he had less manpower now than he had in 1986 and he would like to ask for more experienced people. He stated that the Department keeps plodding along, but there are some areas that get neglected due to lack of manpower. Mr. Keoseian asked if Mr. Delaney could have a summary of the effectiveness of the requested positions prepared.

Mr. Dillon asked what Mr. Delaney had the projected for an increase in energy costs. Mr. Delaney explained that a .50/gal increase in kerosene equaled a \$20,000 increase. Mr. Delaney stated that he had done extra paving last fall due to an impending increase from \$35/ton to \$42/ton in asphalt and he had saved \$50-60,000.

Mr. Cunningham asked if filling one position would help if the requested two positions could not be approved. Mr. Delaney stated that anything would be a help.

Town Forest Committee Appointment

Mr. John Sheedy and Mr. Alan Taylor were present for this portion of the meeting.

Mr. Dillon asked each candidate to give a brief introduction.

Mr. Sheedy stated that he was a wildlife biologist and a lifetime resident of Groton. Mr. Sheedy stated that he would like to see the continuation of multi use and would like to see some clearing of the town forest.

Mr. Taylor stated that he has spent a lot of time hiking in the Town Forest and thinks that it is a tremendous asset of the Town.

Mr. Cunningham asked if the candidates were familiar with the Forestry Program and asked if there would be any changes they would like to make.

Mr. Sheedy stated that he was not familiar with the program, but he would like to review it and discuss it with the other members.

Mr. Taylor stated that there had been some cutting and the area looks trashed.

Mr. Cunningham stated that motorized vehicle use had been discontinued in the Town Forest and asked if either candidate envisioned that changing. Mr. Taylor stated that he would like to keep it the way it is. Mr. Sheedy stated that he would not be in favor of opening the use to any motorized vehicles.

Mr. Saball moved to nominate Mr. John Sheedy and Mr. Alan Taylor to the position of Town Forest Committee.

The Board cast ballots as follows: 4 – Sheedy; 1- Taylor (Keoseian)

Mr. Saball moved to appoint John Sheedy to the Town Forest Committee for the vacant unexpired three-year term, term to expire June 30, 2007. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Unanimous vote.

Mr. Saball moved to enter into Executive Session at 8:20 p.m., in accordance with M.G. L. 39, Section 23B, for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have detrimental effect on the Town's bargaining or litigation position. Also, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and will not reconvene in Open Session. Seconded by Mr. Nordblom. Roll Call Vote: Dillon - yes; Saball – yes; Nordblom – yes; Cunningham – yes; Keoseian– yes

Approved: _____
Robert W. Nordblom, Clerk

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Newell
Office Assistant

Enclosure: Handout - Justification of Young Adult Librarian (January 2006)

Date Approved: May 8, 2006