

TOWN OF LISBON, NEW HAMPSHIRE
SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
11/23/2015

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Stephen Knox (S. Knox), Donald Butson (D. Butson), Thomas Demers (T. Demers).
Town Administrator: Daniel Merhalski (D. Merhalski)

MEETING OPENED: S. Knox opened the meeting at 5:00 pm.

SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS:

Executive Session

A motion to go into Executive Session according to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) and (c) was made by S. Knox, 2nd by D. Butson. Roll Call vote: S. Knox – yea, D. Butson, yea, T. Demers – yea. The Board went into Executive Session at 5:00 pm.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 5:44 pm.

The Board signed the AP and Payroll Manifests.

The Board reviewed the Draft Minutes of the November 9th, 2015 Regular Meeting. A motion was made by D. Butson to accept the Minutes, as written, 2nd by S. Knox. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by D. Butson to accept the Minutes of November 9th, 2015 Executive Session, as written, 2nd by T. Demers. Motion passed unanimously.

Review Lisbon Hazard Mitigation Plan Update:

The Board discussed the draft Hazard Mitigation Plan from June Garneau, particularly Chapter 5 and the Implementation sections. The Board was happy with the work done. D. Merhalski stated that the plan was just being sent to the Board at this time in the event that they wanted to make any revisions or ask questions of it. T. Demers, as the Town's Emergency Management Director, will need to authorize J. Garneau to submit the final plan to FEMA and when they give it their conditional approval, it will come back to the Board for their vote to accept it. T. Demers said he would send his approval to J. Garneau by the end of the week.

Discussion of Town Employee Health Insurance:

D. Merhalski spoke to the Board about the increase in the Town's current employee health insurance plans of 3.9% for this year. The current total amount of this funding is over \$190,000, so trying to keep costs down is a goal for the coming year. D. Merhalski said that he had contacted the staff and held an all-staff meeting to discuss the options that HealthTrust, the Town's insurance provider, had. After meeting with Peter Chapel of HealthTrust and discussing the various options, the staff voted to maintain their current plan and contribution levels. D. Merhalski said that he was looking around for other similar providers, of which

there are only four that can offer health insurance in New Hampshire, but that he had only heard back from one of them. HealthTrust has a deadline to know if we are going to continue with them of November 30th, and as this is the only Selectmen's meeting prior to then, unless the Board wanted to call a Special Meeting, they would have to decide this evening. D. Merhalski said that the plan that he had heard back from was not an apples to apples comparison by any stretch, and that the coverage and network options of it were significantly different from what the current plan is. The Board asked the staff that was in attendance at the meeting if they had anything that they wanted to say. Fred Garafalo, Transfer Station Supervisor, said that he was very happy with the health insurance that the Town currently provides and he did not want to see it change. Scott Pinson, Police Chief, said that he knows that there is an increase of 3.9%, but that the employees have had to face some years of not getting any increases in their salaries and cost of living. He said that he wanted to stay with the current plan as it is a good plan and that it remains an incentive for the employees to stay with Lisbon. He also requested that the additional increase in the amount staff pay for the 18% match be covered by the Town. Kevin Clement stated that he thought that 3.9% wasn't that much of an increase and that the portion that the staff are paying will go up with that as well. He also said that staff had gone without pay increases, sometimes for years at a time, and that he wanted to keep the current insurance and the current 18% employee cost share. D. Merhalski said that the total dollar amount of the increase was approx. \$7,500 and that if the Board so desired, he could find the funding in the budget to cover this amount. D. Butson asked how this would effect the \$0 increase year to year that was requested by the Selectmen? K. Clement said that the amount of the total cost increase divided by the number of covered employees was \$1,500 for his department and that he thought the cuts to the budget to pay for this increase should be divided up into each department proportional to the amount of staff that they have that take insurance. D. Butson said he thought that was a good idea. D. Merhalski said if the Board wanted him to go out to look for a different insurance plan, he could try to find something similar, but they would have to tell HealthTrust that they were passing at this meeting tonight, and that if we did leave HealthTrust, we would be precluded from returning to them for three years. They felt that if the cuts could be found in the budget to maintain the zero increase that they asked for, they could approve the health insurance increase and staying with HealthTrust. A motion was made by S. Knox to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the renewal form for HealthTrust to keep the employee health insurance coverage the same as present with the same employee cost share, 2nd by D. Butson. Motion passed unanimously. D. Merhalski thanked the Board for their willingness to continue this coverage at the current level.

Water Bill Abatement:

The Board reviewed the request for an abatement for the water bill for Mrs. Garrett. This was due to a faulty meter. D. Butson asked if the meter was to be fixed. D. Merhalski indicated that it was. A motion was made by T. Demers, 2nd by D. Butson to approve the abatement. Motion passed unanimously.

Review of Water/Wastewater Roof Project Status:

T. Demers recused himself from the discussion. The Board reviewed the estimates for the Wastewater Blower building roof repairs as submitted by Demers Construction. D. Merhalski said that he had asked Kevin Clement to look at the blower building's roof as

requested by the Board, and that he said that the shingle should be replaced if possible. A motion to approve both estimates for the insurance work to the damaged Wastewater Building for \$3,678.00 and replace the Blower Roof for \$2,188.00 was made by S. Knox, 2nd by D. Butson. Motion passed 2-0.

Discussion of Proposed Increase in Water/Wastewater Rates from Welch's:

D. Merhalski said that the Water/Wastewater Contractor, Welch's Water, had sent him a fax last week stating that they would be increasing their charge for services for the Town Wastewater by 12%, effective January 1st, 2016 and that they would have to get back to us with their Water services charge increase amount. D. Merhalski said that this was not indicated to him when he had asked Welch's if there would be any increase in their service costs during the budget preparation process in October, as so was not included in the current proposed budget that was sent to the Selectmen and the Advisory Budget Committee. D. Merhalski also said that he had talked to Terry Welch that day and Mr. Welch had asked for this item to be tabled until the December 14th meeting so that he could provide the Board with more information before they discussed this. S. Knox asked if the Board could get the figures of the increases for the Water and Sewer services charges for the past five years to have as comparison with the current increase. D. Merhalski said that he had those reports and could give them to the Board for the meeting on the 14th. He also said that he did not know what would happen if the Town decided not to agree to these terms as Welch's had not signed the three-year contract that the Board had approved sending to them and they were currently operating without a contract at the water and wastewater facilities. T. Demers asked if DES could provide any help. D. Merhalski said that he would check with them to see if they could provide some sort of emergency operation in the event that Welch's walked away from the Town, but he did not think that Welch's would do that, though technically, there was no legal requirement for Welch's to stay and operate the facilities without a contract. T. Demers asked if they could look into hiring a Water/Wastewater operator at the Town level to take over the responsibility? D. Merhalski said that they could, and that licensed operators who worked for the Town are what most of the Town's he had worked in had. He said that he could look into the salary rates and requirements for that A motion was made by S. Knox to table this item to December 14th, 2nd by D. Butson. Motion passed unanimously.

Town Administrator's Report

D. Merhalski asked the Board if they wanted to entertain a request by a resident to lease the Town Hall gym for private basketball lessons for his family? The Board agreed that it was ok to do so for \$25 a week as long as it doesn't interfere with other events that also use the gym.

D. Merhalski informed the Board about a prospective applicant to the Conservation Commission. The Board requested that the applicant's info be sent to the chair of the Conservation Commission for her comment. D. Merhalski also handed out copies of the proposed new Purchase Request Form for all purchases over \$1,000. A motion was made by S. Knox, 2nd by D. Butson to adopt the new forms and send them out to the Department Heads.

D. Merhalski relayed a request from the Library to have the DPW shovel the snow on the sidewalk from the street to the door this year. The Board discussed what implementation

of this would mean and that the current practice was to have whoever is in the building do their own shoveling from the sidewalk, which the DPW clears, to the door. The Board decided to maintain this current practice and deny the request for this year.

The Board discussed the current use of the wood-fired boiler at the DPW and having staff come in on the weekends to keep it going in the winter. S. Knox asked if it was still paid at overtime? D. Merhalski said that it was and that he would like to look at the costs of that over this winter to see if a new furnace at the DPW that does not need staff attendance to keep heating would be justified. S. Knox asked if the Transfer Station attendants could stop off at the DPW on their way in to, and home from, the Transfer Station and fill the boiler with wood to avoid this cost? D. Merhalski said that he would like to ask the staff if they could do this and he would report back to the Board.

D. Butson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by T. Demers. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Merhalski, Town Administrator