

**TOWN OF LISBON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**SELECTMEN'S SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**  
October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**SELECTMEN PRESENT:** Thomas Demers (T. Demers)(arrived 5:43pm), Peter Nightingale (P. Nightingale), Matthew Yeramian (M. Yeramian).  
Town Administrator: Dan Merhalski (D. Merhalski), Chief of Police Scott Pinson (S. Pinson), Fire Chief Greg Hartwell (G. Hartwell), Dave Combs, Life Squad (D. Combs).

**MEETING OPENED:** P. Nightingale opened the meeting at 5:32 pm.

The Board reviewed documents to be signed. A question about the condition of the road for the Certificate of Occupancy for the house on Quimby Road Extension was asked by Chief Greg Hartwell. The Board asked D. Merhalski to find out if it had been brought up to Town standards and not to sign the Certificate of Occupancy until that had been confirmed. D. Merhalski will find out its status.

The Board reviewed and signed the AP and payroll manifests.

**Discussion of Ross Funeral Home Site for Municipal Uses** – The Board explained the history of the Town's acquisition of the former Ross Funeral Home site and the request for proposals that had gone out earlier this year with no responses. T. Demers explained a copy of a plan from the Town of Campton, NH that had incorporated municipal services including the Police Dept. and had been able to use Homeland Security funding for portions of the \$1.2 million construction cost. The Board explained that the reason for the discussion tonight was to gather public input into the interest of having the Ross Funeral Home site, previously purchased only for use as a site for the Fire Dept., to also be used for a municipal services building along with the Fire Dept. and to ask, if that should occur, what the public wanted to do with the current Town Hall building.

Sgt. Scott McKinley said that the current Town Hall building had issues with fumes entering the other parts of the building when the Fire Dept. started up their vehicles in the bays.

Greg Jesseman said that the Town Hall building was a valuable historic structure and wanted to have it looked at by the historic society or other groups to see if it could be saved.

Jan Carver liked the idea of the new municipal building, but said the cost was scary to her.

G. Hartwell said that the Fire Dept. had plans for a new Fire Station that they were planning on bringing to Town Meeting in 2018 for a building that would cost about \$750,000. If the board wanted, he could bring it forward to 2017 Town Meeting. The Board said this change in timing was not necessary.

G. Jesseman asked why the Town needed a new meeting space for Town Meeting when there is room at the school? T. Demers said that DHS had suggested having an emergency operations center on this side of the river in the event that the town had an emergency dealing with the bridge and that DHS funding could cover some of the costs of the new building and an Emergency Operations Center.

Ron Lippard said the bridge over the river sucks.

Dorothy Blodgett asked how much it would cost to tear down the Ross Funeral Home building? T. Demers said it would depend on what it was made of and if there were any hazardous materials that had to be removed first, but that the Town could do a controlled burn for the Fire Dept. to demolish the structure after that had taken place. He also said that the cost of the building in Campton included some demolition.

Scott Champagne said the Board needs to find out how much it will cost to fix Town Hall for comparison before they make a decision.

Chief Scott Pinson said he would be willing to have the Police Dept. remain at the current Town Hall building and use the area they are currently in, with the addition of the Fire Dept. bays for the cruisers.

The Board thanked the public for their input and agreed that they would need more information on the costs to repair Town Hall before they made a decision on how to proceed with the Ross Funeral Home site.

**Review of PD FY 2017 Budget – Staff Funding** – P. Nightingale said that he was in favor of hiring the 3<sup>rd</sup> Full-Time police officer as it had been approved in the current year's budget at Town Meeting, but that he would like to see an additional \$20,000 cut from the Police Dept.

S. Pinson said that he had already cut the budget and that overtime had been cut, but that he had no control over whether it needed to be used or not.

J. Carver asked why the figure of \$20,000? What is the goal for the Town by cutting that?

P. Nightingale said it was to try to be responsive to the wishes of the Town as described in the recent community survey in which 80% of those surveyed said that reducing taxes was the top priority for the town to address. He said that unless the tax rate can be lowered and brought under control the Town will be in a death spiral as no one will want to move here and the tax base will continue to drop, raising the tax rate and the costs for these services still more.

R. Lippard said there was a 6,000 lb. elephant in the room that farted and it was the school. He said the town needs municipal services and they should cut the school budget.

P. Nightingale reminded the audience that the Selectmen have no control over the School budget but that residents did if they showed up at the School Board annual meeting.

T. Demers brought up a petition that had been recently received calling for the Town to go to the SB2 form of government and that if it applied to the school it would address some of the issues with the attendance at school board meetings. He said he was in favor of going to SB2 for this reason.

S. Pinson said that with 3 full-time officers they can do 24-hour coverage, but with only 2 they will not and the Town will be required to use the State Police for coverage.

Nina Brown asked where the Town wants the \$20,000 to come from and spoke about the costs of state police service since her husband works for the County Sherriff's Dept. and deals with calls going to the State Police.

P. Nightingale said part of it would likely come from the prosecutor being hired to take off the workload of the Chief and reduce costs to the Dept. that way. Members of the public were not in favor of using that particular prosecutor.

R. Lippard said there was an op-ed in the newspaper and that the reason for difficulty in hiring staff was the Town Administrator and that people are scared for their jobs.

A motion was made by P. Nightingale to authorize filling the third full-time position through the hiring process, 2<sup>nd</sup> by T. Demers. Motion passed 3-0.

A motion to adjourn was made by P. Nightingale, 2<sup>nd</sup> by T. Demers. Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan Merhalski, Town Administrator