

**Enfield Board of Selectmen
Whitney Hall
Enfield, New Hampshire**

MINUTES of February 7, 2011

Board of Selectmen: John W. Kluge, Chairman; Donald J. Crate, Sr.; B. Fred Cummings

Administrative Staff: Steven Schneider, Town Manager; Alisa D. Bonnette, Executive Assistant; Richard A. Crate, Jr., Chief of Police; Jim Taylor, Director of Public Works.

Others: Paul Mirski, Dan Kiley, Dave Stewart, Sam Eaton, David Beaufait

BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kluge called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Cummings moved to approve the regular session minutes of January 24, 2011, Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Cummings move to approve the non-public session minutes of January 24, 2011, Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Kelly A. Ayotte, U.S Senator Letter of Introduction

HB 457 Relative to Reducing the Interest Rate on Late and Delinquent Property Tax Payments:

HB 457 proposes reducing the interest rate on late and delinquent property taxes by 50%. Mr. Kluge believes this could hit the Town hard.

Mr. Schneider explained that the interest rate was reduced from 18% to 12% in the time since he came to work for the Town. Having a higher interest rate can be the carrot to pay taxes on time. A 6% interest rate would have an impact on the Town's yearly receivables.

Paul Mirski doesn't think the interest rate reduction is a good thing for Towns. He would keep it at 12%.

The Board unanimously agreed to write a letter in opposition to HB 457.

NH City & Town Clerk's Association ~ Draft Proposed Legislation to Allow Dealerships to Process Motor Vehicle Registrations Electronically Using a 3rd Party Vendor:

This proposed legislation would allow dealerships to register vehicles one time only at the time of purchase. This would save the car buyer from having to make a trip to the Town Clerk's Office for the initial registration. There are problems currently with car dealerships completing paperwork correctly. This may not improve the relationship between dealerships and Town Clerks.

Mr. Crate does not believe this is a good idea.

Mr. Schneider reported that the Enfield Town Clerk is opposed to it.

The Board unanimously agreed to write a letter in opposition to this legislation in support of the Town Clerk's position.

Mr. Mirski recommended getting out a letter, post haste, or even emailing it to the sponsor of the bill.

Town Clerk's Report ~ January 2011:

January didn't start off well at about \$6,000 less than 2010 revenues.

Tax Collector's Reports ~ January 2011:

The Board reviewed the Tax Collector's Reports. The report of percent collected is a better indicator of where we stand in tax collections. We're currently at 94% of the second issue tax bill collected. A year ago we were at 93% collected.

The Board also received a report of potential tax deedings. There are several property owners that are on the list on a yearly basis. The Tax Collector expects almost all will be paid up by deeding time.

Mr. Kluge asked if the payment plan for Whaleback had fallen through.

Mr. Schneider explained that payments are not moving at the rate we agreed to, though they are making payments. The total due is just over \$86,000 going back to 2008. To get off of the deeding list they will have to pay taxes through 2009; about \$40,000.

Mr. Kluge noted that when the Board last discussed this there was a specific payment plan.

Mr. Schneider replied there are a couple of pieces of property. This one is owned by Whaleback LLC. Mr. Schneider doesn't believe the Town will end up owning this property, the banks would. Mr. Schneider hopes they're having a good year and will be able to pay the taxes.

Mr. Kluge asked what the process is now.

Mr. Schneider will reach out to Mr. Sparrow and Mr. Dybvig to let them know what's due to avoid deeding. It's beyond time for special consideration for them.

IV. BOARD REPORTS

Enfield Village Association:

Mr. Kluge reported that EVA is focusing on economic development. The director is working on a press release for the Valley News regarding a new business in Town.

Friday, February 25th EVA will have a forum at Yogapiphany giving Enfield businesses an opportunity to get together. There are plans for a forum to be held once a month.

V. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

No additional report at this time.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dan Kiley ~ Non-Public Session:

Mr. Kiley said that, based on what happened, he thinks a part of the non-public session minutes of January 24, 2011 have to be made public. Referring to the proposed purchase of the 217 Main Street property, he doesn't believe that it's a non-public issue.

Mr. Cummings responded that the Selectmen didn't seal the minutes so they are public.

Mr. Schneider explained that while they were not on-line they are available upon request.

Mr. Kluge said there is no reason to make them less than public.

Mr. Kiley stated that they appeared to him they weren't available.

Mr. Cummings informed Mr. Kiley that the Board did vote to place the article on the warrant.

Mr. Kiley was offered a copy of the non-public minutes of January 24, 2011, which he declined.

David Beaufait ~ School Deliberative Session:

At the School Deliberative Session Dr. Beaufait made a point of transparency. Dr. Beaufait thanked Carolee Higbee for the tax rate comparison with other towns. The school tax rate will still go up 10% on a straight line projection since there will be \$750,000 less coming from the State.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

2011 Budget:

This agenda item provided an opportunity for the Selectmen to discuss the Budget Hearing. No comments were made.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS**2011 Warrant:**

At the Budget Hearing the Budget Committee received a draft warrant and voted to recommend the budget article as submitted: \$5,071,304. Dave Stewart filled in as chair of that hearing, which was attended by about 15 people.

The Budget Committee voted in favor of the article for the purchase of the McConnell Road parcel and swap with the Lovejoy Brook Road parcel, as well as the deposit of funds into the Cemetery Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund and establishment and deposit into an Enfield Trails Expendable Trust Fund.

The article that generated the most discussion was the proposed purchase of the 217 Main Street property. Alisa Bonnette worked with the NH Dept. of Revenue Administration to be sure the article wording meeting their requirements.

The Budget Committee did not recommend the article as presented to them. The article proposed raising and appropriating \$400,000 with the withdrawal of \$71,500 from the Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund to offset the expenditure and minimize the tax impact.

Additional language was discussed at the Budget Meeting. The amended article proposed tonight more specifically reflects the Board of Selectmen's discussion. The amended article proposes raising and appropriating \$400,000 with the withdrawal of \$71,500 from the Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund and up to \$100,000 from the unreserved fund balance of 12/31/2010. Without that funding the purchase is pushing a 70 cent impact on the tax rate. With the funding it may be a 35 cent to 45 cent tax impact. This would equate to about \$130 to \$140 on a \$250,000 home.

Mr. Schneider got a sense from the Budget Committee that they were OK with the article with the addition of funding from the unreserved fund balance.

Mr. Stewart agreed that is generally correct. No one nailed it down to what kind of increase they were willing to accept. This was discussed at the Budget Hearing so an email vote should be good.

Mr. Schneider added that a record of the responses into the minutes would document the action.

There was talk of a 501 (c)(3) but also of going through the Enfield Village Association. In any case the plan has to be acceptable to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Mirski said that, regarding the cost, earlier we were looking at 35 cents on the tax rate. Forty-five cents is higher. When the proposal came in at 70 cents it was very discouraging. He suspects someone can put together a proposal that can work. There was discussion about use by an outside entity and some regional use. If the project is taken on by the Town's Recreation Commission it would seem primarily for Enfield people. It's just a different perception when you think it's for the community from the outset. It would be a great place for recreation operations. Mr. Mirski doesn't think that's a bad way to think about it.

Mr. Mirski added that we're looking at the cost of the school going up. It's at the expense of what can benefit the community. How do you get Enfield to see itself as worthy of a great waterfront property for itself? He thinks the amendment is fine.

Mr. Kluge pointed out that the problem with what Mr. Mirski is proposing is that we're changing the plan half way through the proposal.

Mr. Cummings mentioned looking at ways to get revenue including renting Town docks for the summer. In the end we don't want to give up control of the property.

Mr. Kluge said we want to get our foot in the door. This needs to be presented as something for Enfield, not a regional thing.

Mr. Kiley said he feels this sailing thing is elitist. Lake Champlain has one week sailing, Level 1, for 10 year olds for \$300; Level 2 for \$300 and Level 3 for \$500. He gets the feeling the Town will get no more access if the Board puts in a sailing center than it does now.

Mr. Cummings mentioned there was talk about renting the bottom room to them.

Mr. Kluge said Mr. Kiley makes a good point. Let's not create something we aren't ready to make use of.

The Board considered the order in which the articles will appear on the warrant. Mr. Cummings likes the order in which they appear on the draft warrant. The Board agreed to order the articles as follows: Article 3 – Operating Budget, Article 4 – Lovejoy Brook Road/McConnell Road property swap, Article 5 – 217 Main Street Property Acquisition, Article 6 – Cemetery Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund, Article 7 – Trail Expendable Trust Fund, and Article 8 – To hear reports.

Mr. Cummings moved to recommend Article 3 (operating budget), Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Cummings moved to recommend Article 4 (property swap), Mr. Crate seconded. Mr. Cummings and Mr. Kluge in favor of the motion, Mr. Crate abstained, motion carried.

Mr. Cummings moved to recommend Article 5 (217 Main Street property acquisition), Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Cummings moved to recommend Article 6 (Cemetery Maintenance expendable trust fund), Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Cummings moved to recommend Article 7 (Trail expendable trust fund), Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Kiley believes that on *Version 2*, Article 5 as approved by the Selectmen, should have the word "development" removed so it reads, "This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the acquisition is completed or by December 31, 2012, whichever is sooner." The Board agreed and the article will read as Mr. Kiley suggested.

Administrative Items:

The Board reviewed and approved the following documents: Property tax abatement/refund, Current Use application, Elderly Exemption application, Certifications of Yield Taxes Assessed, Land Use Change Tax and Veterans Tax Credit.

IX. OTHER ITEMS**Wildlife Area:**

The Legislature will be discussing the naming of the Wildlife Area for Henry Laramie on Wednesday at perhaps 1:30 or 2:30 in the State House.

CONFERENCE**I. NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

Mr. Cummings moved to enter non-public session at 7:15 PM, RSA 91-A:3 II (a), Mr. Crate seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Cummings – aye, Mr. Crate – aye, Mr. Kluge – aye.

Mr. Crate moved to come out of non-public session at 7:26 PM, Mr. Cummings seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion.

II. OTHER**CDL Class:**

March 7th is the 2nd day of a CDL class, the practical portion. February 28th is the classroom portion. Mr. Cummings requested the use of a Town highway truck for the participating firefighters to use in lieu of a fire vehicle. Mr. Crate & Mr. Kluge agreed. Jim Taylor will find a suitable truck for them to use.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Crate moved to adjourn at 7:36 PM, Mr. Cummings seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion, meeting adjourned.