

**Town of Chesterfield
Board of Selectmen**

**MINUTES
February 25, 2009**

Call to Order

Chairman Jon McKeon called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Others in attendance were Board members Dan Cotter (arrived at 6:50 pm), Bob Brockmann and Administrator Rick Carrier.

Appointments

- Steve Dompier (unscheduled)

Dompier advised that he lives on Spofford Lake and complained that the letter from Commerford, Neider & Perkins was unclear with respect to appealing the assessment for 2008 as it only noted filing in writing by March 1st to the Selectmen and did not specify the abatement application. He had since received the application.

Dompier stated he does not believe his 50 x 100' lot on Spofford Lake was assessed equitably with the surrounding properties. The Board advised him to submit the abatement application to the office by Monday, March 2nd due to the March 1st deadline falls on Sunday.

- 6:30 Senator Molly Kelly

Senator Kelly asked what the biggest issues are for the Town. The Board advised it is the taxes. There are more unpaid taxes this year compared to last year. McKeon stated that the Board was concerned with the Governor's budget. Kelly stated they are at the beginning of the budget process. The budget will now go to the House and then to the Senate.

Kelly stated they are looking at how to take care of the biggest needs and move on. The revenues are down substantially in 3 line items; business profits, business enterprise and property transfer taxes. Either we bring money in or reduce spending.

Brockmann stated that if we ran government like business you can't increase spending by 17% as the State has done. He stated that the buck stops here and this is where it all comes to when the State removes revenue from the Town. Not only revenue but expenditures; we are looking at whether to give employees increases as has been the policy.

Kelly stated it is not a spending issue. Out of the 17% increase only 3% is discretionary spending. Health and Human Services is in this 3% and cutting it won't make it go away; it would just come back to the towns.

McKeon stated that the Governor doesn't want to pass off to towns but where does he think it's going to go? Kelly stated we need to change the way we govern by efficiency, cuts, savings and revenue. She stated there are 4 major cost drivers; correction, retirement, education and Medicaid.

In the proposed budget these items will be addressed. It is expected that 250 – 300 people will be laid-off and vacated positions haven't been filled in the last 2 years. They expect to close some field offices in the Dept. of Safety and use technology.

In Health and Human Services Foster Care will be redesigned. Laconia prison will be closed. Kelly stated that 4 out of 5 inmates are High School dropouts. She wants to focus on education. McKeon noted that NH is 49th out of 50 in education.

Kelly stated they will be consolidating district courts. The State will cover 100% for adequacy for Education funding. They will bond for building schools, Healthy Kids will be funded, developmentally disabled programs covered and mitigating State Tuitions.

McKeon stated that in his opinion the state needs an income tax and stay away from a sales tax as it is regressive. Kelly stated she has not taken the pledge.

Kelly stated that looking at revenues; they will close some liquor stores and have sales in grocery stores etc. They would increase the cigarette tax, Rooms and Meals tax (this will not be going to the towns) and tax charitable gambling. They will increase the tolls with a cap and increase car registrations by \$10. They will also use the Medical Malpractice Fund.

Kelly stated that in regard to saving; they will consolidate regulatory boards and commissions and sun-setting some commissions.

Kelly stated that the stimulus money is coming in but we don't know how much. This will bring us up to the State's 10 year highway plan threshold. The State has put off too much in infrastructure.

The stimulus will go toward education; by increasing the school funding but decreasing the Rooms & Meals tax we hope it will be revenue neutral. That is their goal.

Carrier advised that removing the Rooms & Meals tax revenue from the Town would increase the Town tax rate by 12%. Kelly asked that he send those figures to her to see how the State budget will affect people in Chesterfield. She also asked for ideas from the Board.

Cotter stated that the stimulus money is not magically appearing; it comes from us and it is a major increase in the national debt. Kelly invited the Board to attend the Finance Committee meeting. Brockmann stated he sees wasteful spending on highways when he sees crews with multiple vehicles and inefficient work practices.

The Board sees efficiency as one of the biggest areas to address. Cotter stated that efficiency is part of cutting costs.

Kelly stated she wants to see that the revenue sharing is fair and equitable. She is dedicated to education. She is looking at the short term and the long term. More short term items are addressed because of the elections every 2 years and the voters look at what's there at the moment.

McKeon stated we look at the long term because short term gives repercussions for the long term. McKeon stated that what we are trying to figure out is how we can continue the basic services we need in Town without driving residents out because they can't afford to live here.

Kelly thanked the Board for their time and left the meeting.

➤ 7:00 Ruth Van Houten

Van Houten presented a draft of the After Action Report of the ice storm emergency. Once the report is finalized it will be posted around Town with an e-mail address for comments. They were not aware at the time of the process for restoring electric to communities. PSNH is holding a round table discussion with Christopher Pope and area OEM's on March 19th.

Van Houten stated they would like to have time at the Town and School District Meetings to discuss the RENTS (Rapid Emergency Notification Telephone System) program information.

OEM will soon be online. They will be hosting and area dosimeter training on March 4th. They have scheduled 3 daytime drills; March 18th, April 15th and June 10th. The school generator is scheduled to be repaired. The Spofford Fire house will be equipped with emergency communications with Concord so the OEM office could operate there during an emergency if necessary.

Van Houten has purchased the book, The Unthinkable, Who Survives When Disaster Strikes and Why. McKeon borrowed the book to read.

Van Houten stated that she and John Keppler will be on WKBT radio to discuss preparedness. Van Houten congratulated Sharyn D'Eon for holding school during the emergency giving stability and warm food for the children. She also stated that going door to door during the emergency was well received by the residents.

➤ Brenda O'Shea (unscheduled)

O'Shea advised she was present representing Mark Kearny Inc to discuss the intent to excavate he had submitted on advice from the Code Enforcement Officer. There is no excavating going on, they only want to level the lot for building purposes. They had called DES and were told they don't need a permit because it doesn't fit into the requirements. McKeon advised that the State may not require it but the Town

requires they go to the Planning Board. The Town regulations are more stringent than the State's in this case and the more stringent would apply. He noted that any activity would necessitate a visit to the Planning Board. O'Shea advised they are not excavating any gravel, just to level the lot as Osterman had done. They were not required to get a permit from the State. McKeon stated that the local ordinances require it. O'Shea stated they just want to pick up the property to make it a useable site. McKeon stated that picking up the property is different than picking up the property and moving fill around to make it a useable site. He noted Land Development Regulations Article 201.2.

O'Shea stated they have been before the Planning Board and have spent thousands of dollars to develop the commercial site and have been turned down. There is no plan at this time to develop the site. She asked that the excavation permit be pulled. Carrier advised that Kearney must request that the permit application be pulled as he was the signee. She stated that Kearney was to pick her up from the meeting and when he did he would come in to withdraw the intent. McKeon suggested they get on the Planning Board agenda for a conceptual consultation.

For Signature

- Manifest #9
- Selectmen minutes – Feb 18th
- SWRPC digital tax map request
- Veterans' tax credit applications

For Discussion

- Town Meeting budget options

The Budget Committee recommends changing funding for the Old Chesterfield Road project to include the Town's share from the Roadways CRF and not to fund that CRF this year. This savings would offset the additional cost of the Wares Grove septic. The Town has a FEMA grant to pay ½ of the \$92,000 for this project. The Town's balance is in the CRF.

Cotter stated we have to decide what a CRF is for. He stated in his mind it could be used for projects to offset a bond. We would have funds from the CRF if we contribute to it to reduce the bond amount. McKeon stated because we would never have the money necessary for large projects the CRF could offset the engineering and research fees for road projects. Now that Bevis is implementing a plan for road projects we would have a better idea of the road maintenance issues and timing. McKeon stated he would want to keep putting funds into the CRF. Either you pay and stay up with the maintenance now or you pay more later on.

The Board agreed to use the money that is now in the CRF to pay towards the Old Chesterfield Rd project but to also put \$25,000 back into the fund this year.

➤ Stimulus funds pre-application – Wares Grove septic

McKeon updated Cotter on the septic design proposed by Pro for the Wares Grove Septic. Carrier had completed an application for DES under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan of 2009, which is part of the stimulus package, to help fund the Wares Grove septic. Only the Board of Selectmen can apply for the State revolving fund. This project may not qualify but we were advised by DES to submit the application. The Board authorized the application submittal.

➤ Historical Society building insulation

Farnum has given an estimate of \$1,472.50 to add 8” of cellulose to the ceiling of the Historical Society. McKeon asked Carrier to look to see if a weatherization grant might be available. The Board also wants to know what is up there now. Carrier will check with Greenwood to investigate.

➤ Volunteers – Town Boards & Committees

Carrier had a draft poster board advertising volunteer needs. The poster will be set up at both the Town and School District Meetings.

➤ Town Office warranty manuals

The Board reviewed McKeon’s memo. He advised there was incomplete warranty information and he noted the necessary corrections. The Board would like to send the items to Wesfield for review along with the extra materials that were to remain at the building. This would give them time to take care of the items while the other items are being reviewed by the Board instead of handing them all the items to be corrected at once.

➤ Town Office sidewalk/entryway

The Board reviewed Bob Stevens’ e-mail and Charles Michal’s reply regarding the sidewalk and entryway. The Board does not want to wait until next year to take care of the issues. There are ADA and safety concerns as well as wear and tear on the building with its moving like this. The Board wants to go through Michal and advise that they do not feel that what is there is acceptable. Waiting a year to see if it goes down to its intended design is opening the Town up for costs due to inaccessibility, safety and ADA issues. They do not want to be sitting here next winter with these same issues. In the letter they also want a date of an expected reply with the plan of action. Carrier will draft a letter. The Board wants to allow time for the contractor and architect time to deal with this issue. The entryway is not functional, level or meets its intended use.

➤ Pontiac Drive public hearing

The Public Hearing is scheduled for next week. Once the road is accepted the Board will authorize the return of the bonds to the bank.

➤ Code Enforcement letter – Custom Driveshaft

The Board reviewed the Cunningham's draft letter to Bob Goderre regarding code violations at his property at 1757 Route 9. The Board wants a date added for compliance. Carrier will give the information to Cunningham.

➤ Old Business

Spofford Place – John Liptak, DES, e-mailed Carrier to advise that he would be accessing the building to take photos and check the plumbing to the septic tank. He will advise the Board of the results of his inspection.

Master Plan – Bevis had advised McKeon that the new spreadsheet is working well.

Board appointments – John Zannotti has been sworn in for the P&R Commission.

Trustees of the Trust Funds – Amanda Fryberger has been sworn in. McKeon will contact Philbrick.

➤ Other business

1. Brockmann advised he would be attending the NHMA meeting to vote for Chesterfield's interests with regard to future state budget planning.
2. Carrier advised that the Winns were to install the thermostat at the Historical Society. The Board approved the installation.
3. Carrier was told by Neil Jenness that the Historical Society is planning to celebrate the 250 anniversary of the date Chesterfield was settled to be held in 2011.
4. Carrier asked that Cotter get the generator specs to him for the generator and also the building maintenance template.
5. LaFontaine had informed Carrier that Van Houten was upset that the Conservation Commission didn't get her permission to use the OEM room. The policy for use of the room has been set up through Fairbanks and Cooper. The Board suggested that Fairbanks be notified about the communication breakdown.
6. Carrier advised that the pass keys are not working on the front door. He will contact Fairbanks.

Information

- Certificates of attendance – Transfer Station
- Bradstreet/Medford correspondence
- DES permit tracking
- Misc. correspondence & newsletters

Adjournment

With no other business to conduct, Brockmann moved to adjourn, Cotter seconded and the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Ross
Secretary

Approved by:

Jon McKeon, Chairperson

Date

Daniel J. Cotter

Date

Robert Brockmann

Date