

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES**

February 28, 2005

PRESENT:

Ruth I. Clough, Chair, Board of Selectmen
Douglas W. Lyon, Selectman
Mark Kaplan, Selectman
Jessie Levine, Town Administrator

OTHERS PRESENT:

Cotton M. Cleveland, Town Moderator
Linda Hardy, Town Clerk/Tax Collector
Carolyn Dube, Argus Champion
Debbie Cross, Intertown Record

Chair Clough called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

Meeting Minutes: Mr. Kaplan moved to approve the minutes of February 22, 2005. Second Mr. Lyon – Approved 3-0 with no changes.

Town Meeting Preparation: Town Moderator Cotton Cleveland said that she has reviewed the Town Meeting warrant, and notes two different things this year. First, there is a petitioned warrant article (Article 32) to increase the veterans' credit to \$500, and the Selectmen have a separate, earlier article (Article 31) to raise the credit to \$200. Mr. Lyon said that he has been "assigned" those articles for Town Meeting, and he plans to begin Article 31 with an overview of the discussions that have occurred up to Town Meeting. Chair Clough said that she would encourage discussion on the floor, as well. Mr. Kaplan said that he wants to make sure voters understand that they can pass both articles; passing the first article, to increase to \$200, guarantees that there will be at least the \$100 increase, which the Selectmen support. If the voters then want to increase the credit to \$500, they should approve the second article. If they want to stop at \$200, then they should vote down the second article. If voters do not want any increase at all, then they would vote against both articles. Ms. Cleveland will contact lead petitioner DJ Lavoie regarding the petitioned article.

Ms. Levine said that the ballot clerks should probably be ready in the event that someone calls for a ballot vote. Ms. Hardy said that they will give bundles of five colored yes/no ballots, which would allow up to five articles to become ballot votes.

Ms. Cleveland said that the second article that will need to be handled differently is Article 35, relative to the gift of land to the Community Center. Since she had previously been on the Community Center steering committee, and since the Cleveland and Kidder families own the prospective Community Center land and are involved in the discussion, she will step down as moderator during this article. The deputy moderator, Bob Bowers, will be out of town, and other possible residents have potential conflicts. Ms. Levine suggested that Town Clerk Linda Hardy step in for that article, and Ms. Hardy agreed.

Ms. Cleveland said that she will allow time at Article 37 to mention the Lake Sunapee Watershed Coalition, per Terry Dancy's request. Ms. Levine said that she will condense the press release into a smaller statement that describes the Coalition's purpose, and Ms. Cleveland will read it aloud. Ms. Cleveland suggested that the town use local newspapers, links, the website, and e-mail to spread the word

about the Watershed Coalition. She also suggested that copies of the press release itself be available for distribution at Town Meeting.

Ms. Cleveland asked that Linda Hardy and Joan Pankhurst give her a list of those who have helped with the potluck dinner so that she can properly thank those involved. She added that the minutes of Town Meeting should include the number of people who voted, both at the polls and on Wednesday night. She suggested that the volunteer interest form also be available as a handout.

Ms. Cleveland referred to a recent article about Town Meetings that appeared in the Local Government Center's Town & City Magazine. One of the suggestions from the article was to use public access television to broadcast Town Meeting, either live or taped. She asked Ms. Levine to talk to Greg Uhrin of Yankee Communications about whether this is possible. She said that on the positive side, this would bring publicity to Town Meeting, and those who could not attend would be able to see the proceedings. On the down side, people would be able to watch and arrive at Town Meeting in time to vote on a particular article. Ms. Levine asked if there would be any cost, since this has not been budgeted. Ms. Cleveland said that would be a question for Yankee. Ms. Levine said that she will talk to Yankee and let people know what she finds out.

As for Election Day, March 8, Ms. Cleveland said that she expects that it will be a far calmer day than November 2, 2004. She asked if the full ballot had been or will be printed in the local papers, and Ms. Levine said that for cost reasons, she and Ms. Hardy had decided to just run the list of candidates and not the full zoning amendments. The zoning ballot and amendments have been publicized for availability at the Town Offices, have been e-mailed to the list serve and posted on the website, and will be included in the Town Report. Ms. Cleveland suggested that a small reading area be set up at Whipple Town Hall for Election Day. Ms. Hardy said that she will notify ballot clerks about Election Day, and Ms. Levine asked that they be reminded about the Election Day parking ordinance (only 20 minute parking allowed at Town Hall). Ms. Hardy asked if the full complement of booths should be set up, and Ms. Cleveland said that for this election, the middle row could be removed.

Mr. Lyon asked if there had been any interest in increasing voting hours, such as opening at 7:00 AM. Ms. Cleveland said that some people want to open at 7:00 instead of 8:00 AM and close at 8:00 PM instead of 7:00 PM. Ms. Hardy said that she would not be opposed to opening earlier. Ms. Cleveland said that voters may not fully appreciate the benefit of the absentee ballot; if someone cannot make the open poll hours due to work schedule, they can use the absentee ballot to vote. This led to a discussion on how to increase knowledge about absentee ballots. Chair Clough suggested that next year, we emphasize the absentee ballots. Ms. Hardy said that they are mentioned in the shopper and that will come out this week. The Town Clerk's office will be open until 5:00 on Monday, March 7, to receive ballots in person, and ballots that are in the Post Office box by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, March 8, will be counted.

Ms. Hardy said that no one is running for Trustee of the Trust Funds, which means that there will be a lot of write-in votes to be counted. Every write-in, including those meant to be funny, will have to be counted, which will take some time. Ms. Levine asked what would happen if someone won the Trustee seat by write-in. Ms. Hardy said that if they could accept the position. If not, the position would go to the next highest write-in recipient. If no one accepted, only then could the Selectmen appoint someone for that seat.

Ms. Cleveland said that she would like to make sure we continue to comply with HAVA (Help American Vote Act) requirements. She would like to have a police officer present during the day to help with traffic, enforce parking, escort people with difficulty walking, and periodically check in on the election proceedings. Ms. Levine will talk to Chief Seastrand about making an officer available. Ms. Cleveland asked if the light sign would be put up announcing election hours, and Ms. Levine said that Richard Lee

intended to do that this week. Ms. Cleveland asked that the handicap parking area be cleared and apparent for Election Day, and that the electioneering area be defined.

There being no further discussion, Ms. Cleveland and Ms. Hardy departed at 9:15 AM.

Wage & Classification Study: Ms. Levine said that she had received a revised list of comparable towns from the Local Government Center, correcting some of the mistakes in the previous submittal. Mr. Kaplan noted the typographical error under Grantham's operating budget (N.B., Grantham's correct operating budget in 2004 was \$1,760,542). After some discussion, the Selectmen chose the following eight towns for use as comparables in the wage study: Alton, Henniker, Hopkinton, Newbury, North Hampton, Rye, Sunapee, and Wolfeboro.

COMMUNITY	POPULATION	EQUALIZED VALUE	OPERATING BUDGET	ADMIN ASST/TOWN ADMIN
NEW LONDON	4,379	930,498,564	4,890,373	
ALTON	4,788	1,200,000,000	4,644,165	
GRANTHAM	2,326	422,188,777	1,7610,542	
HENNIKER	4,757	337,124,923	4,194,295	
HILLSBOROUGH	5,331	436,602,746	4,556,972	Bus Admin
HOPKINTON	5,582	562,261,081	4,605,370	
MOULTONBOROUGH	4,765	2,357,868,431	3,571,691	
NEW BOSTON	4,716	431,669,490	2,739,840	
NEWBURY	1,940	548,761,487	2,373,677	
NORTH HAMPTON	4,496	967,039,270	4,111,365	
OSSIPEE	4,426	516,433,467	1,288,825	
PLYMOUTH	6,331	312,601,222	5,645,337	
RYE	5,275	1,489,363,946	5,518,433	
STRAFFORD	3,886	374,500,231	1,438,984	
SUNAPEE	3,166	797,855,032	3,064,201	Town Mgr
SUTTON	1,686	191,980,532	1,305,847	
WAKEFIELD	4,569	719,802,950	2,975,797	
WOLFEBORO	6,371	1,596,549,185	8,608,174	Town Mgr
CLAREMONT	13,211	605,233,680	13,023,469	City Mgr
LEBANON	13,123	1,341,248,748	16,175,828	City Mgr

SIGNATURES:

Building Permits:

- Daniel Carlin, MD, 276 Newport Road (the Gallery), Unit 201 (Map 059, Lot 015-201), permit to install windows in back wall of condominium unit – Approved (Permit 05-010)
- RP Carreker, 684 Burpee Hill Road (Map 56, Lot 5), permit to erect new three-bedroom home – Approved (Permit 05-011)

• **Sign Permits:**

- NONE

Other Items for Signature:

- Disbursement Voucher for the week of February 28, 2005
- Application for Use of Whipple Memorial Town Hall by Northeast Shakespeare Ensemble, for August 20, 21, 27 and 28 – Approved
- Application for Use of Town Office Conference Room by New England K-9 Search & Rescue – Approved
- Pole License Petition from Verizon New England for new light pole on Burnt Hill Road – Approved
- Elderly Exemption Applications

There being no further business, the Board of Selectmen voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessie Levine
Town Administrator