

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of April 11, 2011
MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm in the Selectmen's Office at the Kingston Town Hall. In attendance were Chairman Peter Broderick and Selectmen Charles Hart and Mark Heitz.

Non-Public Session

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Hart and second of Selectman Heitz it was unanimously voted to adjourn to non-public session under the provisions of N. H. RSA 91-A:3, II-b. The Board retired at 7:01 pm.

The Board returned to public session at 7:15 pm in the main meeting room of the Town Hall.

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Hart and second of Selectman Heitz it was unanimously voted to seal the minutes of the non-public session for an indefinite period.

Recreation Department Updates

Recreation Director Donna Duddy was present to update the Board on plans for the 2011 Summer Camp program. At present it's expected that camp will open at Swasey Gym on June 27th. Work to renovate the new facility on Main Street has been held up because bids for some of the finish and electrical work had been incomplete and because no permanent water line has been laid from the new point well into the building's plumbing. Selectmen Hart and Heitz expressed their disappointment that the building hadn't been made ready for the start of the Summer Camp program as had been promised. Ms. Duddy advised that she hadn't been aware of the delay in completion until the past week when she'd requested to be shown the progress.

Department volunteer Roger Clark reported that a property owner across Main Street from the new facility, who also happens to volunteer for the Commission, has asked if the Summer Program might be able to make use of property located in back of her house. She believes that the Town owns the property (it actually is State owned). Chairman Broderick advised that he will look into the ownership of the property and the Board will advise Ms. Duddy if the property can be used.

Mr. Clark advised that a playground set is to be delivered during the coming week and asked if he should have it set up at the new facility site. Selectmen advised that he should have it set up in the sandy area on the site called for in the plan.

Chairman Broderick asked if a Chairman has been selected for the Recreation Commission. Mr. Clark advised that none of the membership is interested in serving as Chairman. He noted that his own experience serving as Chairman had been tainted by a decision of the Board of Selectmen two years ago to deny his request for approval of a \$275.00 purchase order for Christmas gift baskets for senior citizens. He advised that

he had wanted to resign the position then and still feels that the level of interference in the running of departments by the Selectmen is excessive. Selectman Heitz advised that Mr. Clark was a volunteer Commission member - not a paid employee and not a Department Head - and that the Board scrutinizes every payment made by every department. If an expenditure isn't included in the approved budget and isn't a necessary item, it doesn't receive approval. Mr. Clark reiterated his feeling that the Board is too strict in overseeing departmental budgets, noting that he had turned back unexpended budget balances each year he had served as Commission Chair.

Ms. Duddy advised that the annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held on April 23rd from 9:30 until 11:00 am at the Swasey Gym. The event is for Kingston children only.

Ms. Duddy asked if she should continue to plan training of Life Guards in the event that the new facility becomes usable at some point during the summer. Selectmen advised that she should, noting that it would be advisable to have some employees trained even for the program trips to Kingston Lake or Greenwood Pond. Chairman Broderick asked if there are plans to offer swimming lessons. Ms. Duddy advised that she would like to be able to do that at some point.

Ms. Duddy asked the Board if scheduling of athletic fields and other town-owned facilities used by sports groups will be through her. Selectmen advised that it will be. Ms. Duddy, along with the Road Agent and Police Chief, will meet with the Sanborn Youth Football Association to address concerns about field maintenance expense, off road parking, and other issues that the town has raised. The Youth Softball Association has reserved Magnusson Field for the season and the group's insurance certificates have been received.

The Board approved Ms. Duddy's request that she be authorized to purchase a disposable cell phone for her use as Recreation Director. She noted that she has been using her personal phone and wishes to have a separate number for department business.

An open house for the new Recreation facility on Main Street, scheduled to be held on April 30th, has been cancelled.

Fire Department Stipend Discussion

Fire Chief Bill Seaman and Fire Ward Rick Fowler discussed with the Board the payment of stipends for department officers who cover shifts. Chief Seaman reported that he's been advised by the state Labor Board that the shifts are compensable duty and that a stipend must be paid. He noted that, even with hourly increases and increases to coverage stipends adopted by the Department, he is having trouble getting adequate weekend and nighttime coverage. Selectman Heitz advised that they had changed from an annual stipend to hourly compensation as a means of more fairly compensating those officers who were willing to cover shifts, so he finds it disturbing that officers now also want a coverage stipend. Chief Seaman explained that anyone covering a shift is required to stay within town boundaries and to remain ready to respond to a call so they can't even have a glass of wine with dinner. He also noted that all officers are required to also be EMT's. He advised that he's been covering up to

three call shifts a week himself so he understands the inconvenience. He also addressed the matter of hourly differentials, giving as an example the \$.40 per hour difference between an EMT and an Intermediate EMT, where an Intermediate EMT is far more highly trained and expected to perform highly difficult medical procedures when called upon. He suggested that the time when EMT's were not so highly trained and were able to volunteer their time and talents is past; the jobs now call for a far greater level of skill and commitment than twenty years ago. He requested that officers signing on for shift coverage be paid the \$15 per shift stipend (\$50 per shift for Friday and Saturday nights), and advised that he thinks he can find the added expense in his current budget. He doesn't foresee that officers will need to cover shifts more than three times a week. He also suggested that the issue of call coverage will continue to be a problem until the department becomes full-time and that there will continue to be demands for incentives to get adequate coverage. He advised that the town will soon need to decide what level of service they want and are willing to pay for.

Selectman Heitz asked if consideration has been given to the possibility of several area towns pooling their resources to cover a larger area at less expense. Chief Seaman advised that one issue of concern would be response time to the areas of town farther away from the covering facility, i.e., if Brentwood were to cover Kingston, the response time to South Kingston would be far greater than required by ISO.

Selectmen agreed to the payment of coverage stipends to department officers. Selectman Hart asked that statistics on how the program works be kept so that success can be measured. Chairman Broderick suggested that the current year's budget had just been approved on March 8th and that it would have been preferable for the additional expense to have been introduced during the budget process. Chief Seaman advised that there will be more changes to the department pay structure as needs are identified; operating a call department is the most economical way to provide service, but it's increasingly difficult to get the necessary personnel to cover shifts. Selectman Heitz expressed his disappointment that the mentality of wanting to be compensated for every service is filtering from the officers down through the ranks when it should be the officers setting an example for community service.

Administrative Issues

Selectmen reviewed a proposed addition to the Personnel Policy addressing Drug and Alcohol Use by Commercial Driver License personnel. The proposal will be forwarded to department heads for review to ensure it won't conflict with their own departmental policies.

The Board reviewed a letter from Gordon Bakie protesting the means by which 2011 Zoning Article 4 was introduced to voters. He also requested increased access to the town's annual Town Report. A reply will be sent to Mr. Bakie.

Selectman Hart advised that cuts in the state's contributions to employee retirement are resulting in layoffs from area school districts and suggested that the town may want to consider the possible impact on municipal government before it becomes a necessity.

Chairman Broderick advised that the Department of Revenue Administration, in response to an inquiry as to the granting of property tax exemptions, has stated their position to be that each individual property is entitled to a single exemption. The Board agreed that the town will follow that policy when considering exemption applications.

All agenda issues having been addressed, Chairman Broderick ended the televised portion of the meeting at 8:55 pm.

Non-public Session

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Hart and second of Selectman Heitz, it was unanimously voted to adjourn to non-public session under the provisions of N. H. RSA 91-A:3, II-a. The Board retired to non-public session at 8:57 pm. The Board returned to public session at 9:15 pm.

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Hart and second of Selectman Heitz, it was unanimously voted to seal the minutes of the non-public session for an indefinite period.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Grant
Administrative Assistant