

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of January 30, 2012
MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm in the Selectmen's Office of the Kingston Town Hall. In attendance were Chairman Peter Broderick and Selectman Mark Heitz.

Non-public Session

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Heitz and second of Selectman Hart it was unanimously voted to adjourn to non-public session under the provisions of NH RSA 91-A:3, II-c. The Board adjourned at 6:31.

The Board returned to public session at 7:02 pm.

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

Fire Wards Discussion

Fire Wards Kent Walker, John Merrill and Rick Fowler were present to request that the Board consider tabling Article 13 for a year. The article proposes to change the organization of the Fire Department to provide for appointment of the Chief by the Selectmen, with firefighters hired by the Selectmen upon recommendation of the Chief. John Merrill expressed his feeling that the Board should have consulted with the Fire Wards prior to developing the Warrant Article, noting that they had found out about it only after having requested a copy of the Warrant.

Selectman Heitz noted that the article provides for a year long period before the effective date, allowing the Chief time to develop Standard Operating Procedures under which the department will operate. He advised that he's not interested in delaying the re-organization for an additional year as he feels the present system, whereby the Chief is put under the authority of elected officials who also are his employees, has too much potential for conflict.

Chairman Broderick advised that he has been told by Fire Wards several times over the past ten years that they recognize the difficulties of the Fire Ward system and would like to see it changed, but that no action in that direction ever was taken. He explained that Town Counsel had provided his final input on the text of the article only very recently and that he spoke with Chief Seaman about the article as soon as the Chief saw it and contacted him. He further explained that the proposed change to the department's organization will put the Fire Chief on a par with the town's other department heads.

Chairman Broderick and Selectman Heitz both noted that Town Counsel had advised a specified term of employment for the chief's position and that the Board had decided to make the term indefinite instead, because it is not the Board's intent to oversee the Fire Chief any more closely than they do other department heads.

Chairman Broderick stated that he will speak with Town Counsel to ensure that the wording of the article doesn't leave the vote open to challenge, and said that the full Board will meet prior to the Deliberative Session on February 4th to discuss the Fire Wards' request concerning tabling of the article.

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Heitz and second of Chairman Broderick it was voted to accept the Minutes of January 9, 2012 as printed.

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Heitz and second of Chairman Broderick it was voted to accept the Minutes of January 23, 2012 as printed.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm and the Board retired to address administrative issues.

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Grant
Administrative Assistant