

TOWN OF THORNTON

February 6, 2007

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

5:30 The meeting was called to order.

Board members present: Arthur Gross, Ralph Perron and Lee Freeman

Also present: Administrator Andrew (TA); Gary Roberge, and Drew Lemay, from Avitar Associates; Barry VanDeMoere, and Jim Demeritt

Selectman Freeman stated he would not approve the payroll manifest because Chad Downing is down for extra hours and the time frame during which the hours were worked is not indicated. He continued he understands the correction, but the time sheet should have been checked more carefully and hopefully they will be in the future.

Barry VanDeMoere stated that during a snowstorm this past week his mailbox got "creamed". Pictures were shared with the board. He asked if there were other mailboxes hit this past week? None had been reported. Mr. VanDeMoere stated his wife witnessed the plow truck hitting their mailbox. After Mrs. VanDeMoere called the Road Agent, he did come up and fix the box to the best of his ability and dropped off a copy of the Winter Road Policy. Mr. VanDeMoere stated he is feeling that it is a little more than a coincidence, since he came to last weeks Selectmen's meeting. Selectman Freeman asked how one mailbox was hit without getting the other one. Mr. VanDeMoere stated that the door was taken off the other mailbox He stated he placed his mailbox post a little further off the road than first one although his mailbox does stick out a little further. He just wanted to point out to the board that he was in last week and he shouldn't have to be worried about retaliation. He continued he was not here to make accusations, he just finds the timing to be coincidental as he was just offering some constructive criticism.

5:40 It was moved to enter non-public session for legal issues. PASSED (x3) Present were the Board of Selectmen, TA, Gary Roberge and Drew LeMay from Avitar Associates. 6:29 The board returned to public session. It was moved to seal the minutes. PASSED (x3)

6:30 It was moved to enter non-public session relative to a personnel issue. PASSED (x3) Present were the Board of Selectmen. 6:45 The Board returned to public session. It was moved to seal the minutes. PASSED (x3)

Minutes of the January 30, 2007 Selectmen's meeting were approved as amended. PASSED (x3)

The Board directed that the following response to the non-public session of January 30, 2007 be included in the Selectmen's Minutes.

Paragraph #1. The board believes that it is vitally important to maintain proper and accurate hourly records.

Paragraph #3. The board is not putting "wrath" on the Highway Department.

They are only following up on complaints and observations. Trust needs to be earned. The Road Agent has indicated that his records are not accurate and that employees have been doing errands and going to the bank in town vehicles on town time. Time sheets have not been accurate.

Paragraph #5. Selectman Freeman is NOT watching the Highway Department "all of the time". He has observed the department employees as he conducts business and during other times. He will continue to observe their activities, as he feels necessary. As a department manager the RA should know that whether or not an employee does a good job should be reflected individually (as all perform differently). The observations should be noted in their annual reviews.

Paragraph #6. In response to a request for specifics, observations have been made from Selectman Freeman. Complaints have been from: Barry VanDeMoere, Jim Demeritt, Luther Haartz, Ricky Gilpatric, Ashton Wyllie, Carelton Kilmer, Jim and Carolyn Wynn, Bob McAuley, Joel Freeman, Paul White, Phil McEwan, Mike Pomerantz, Tom Michaud, and at least two others who have asked to remain nameless for fear of retaliation.

Paragraph #7. Mr. Sanborn's comments regarding cutting hours for seasonal employees are premature. The discussion regarding a definition of positions was meant as a management discussion and has nothing to do with this year's part time help. Contrary to Mr. Sanborn's request, the board prefers "chain of command communication". Otherwise, there is no need for department managers.

Paragraph #7. The statement is false. In 2000 when Neil Robertson left, the highway department expended \$296,473. 2006 expenditures were \$367,164.

An additional break out is as follows:

1999 Expense \$378,896 less \$136,629 for paving = net budget \$242,267

2000 Expense \$396,473 less \$ 95,944 for paving = net budget \$200,529

2006 Expense \$367,164 less \$ 70,635 for paving and \$20,000 that has been encumbered for 2007 paving leaving a net budget of \$276,529.

Fire Truck. Selectman Perron made a motion to not support the purchase of a new fire truck as it was proposed at the multi-town meeting. Selectmen Perron and Freeman voted YES. Selectman Gross voted NO.

The Board has placed an article to establish a \$10,000 capital reserve account for a Fire Truck and Equipment. The article will be worded so as to be void if the petitioned fire truck article passes.

The Board of Selectmen commends the people who have put forward the time and energy to formulate a petition in support of the fire truck purchase.

Selectman Gross will attend the CIP meeting in Selectman Perron's place on 2/12/07 at 9AM at the Municipal Building.

Selectman Perron stated he spoke with Chris Bolen. Mr. Bolen said Neighborfest and ADAPT representatives are planning to meet.

Selectman Perron brought up a meet the candidate night. The Board discussed whether it should be all candidates or just the Planning Board candidates. It would be for the planning board candidates only. The TA is to set up a date with the moderator if he is available. APPROVED (x3)

An e-mail was received from Sandwich Selectman, Carroll Bewley The TA is to verify with the Road Agent that a "Not Maintained for Winter Travel" sign is posted on Sandwich Notch Road. If a sign is in place, the Board felt that to be adequate. The TA is to respond to Mr. Bewley.

The TA informed the Board that she had advised the auditors to increase the overlay for possible abatements by \$10,000 to \$30,000. This is due to the fact that the Board of Tax and Land Appeals are hearing the 2004 and 2005 Owls Nest property appeals together. The Board approved.

The TA let the board know that several people have been directed to contact the Police Department officer on duty via the Grafton County Dispatch this past week because no one has been at the Police Station during hours that they are normally open.

The Transfer Station Manager reported to the TA that Liz Bedard from Northeast Resource Recovery Association has resigned her post. She has been a great deal of assistance in acquiring grant funding and marketing recyclable items for his facility.

7:45 It was moved to adjourn. PASSED (x3)

**The next scheduled Selectmen's Meeting
Will be
February 13, 2007
5:30 PM at the Municipal Building
The 2007 Budget Hearing
Will be held from 6:30-7:30 PM**