

TOWN OF THORNTON

January 9, 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); Road Agent (RA) Tom.Dubey, George Cheney, Sean McDaniel, Cookie Benton, Tom Mullen, Kelly Weiser, Karl Haartz, Jim Parziale,

5:30 The Board moved to go into non-public session for a personnel issue. Present were the Board members and Road Agent, Tom Dubey. 5:50 The Board returned to public session. It was moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session. PASSED (x3)

Garage doors. The RA stated they have been ordered and should be installed in about 3 weeks.

Upper Mad River Road. The RA stated the road needs to be ditched again. Relative to Karl Haartz drainage issue, the RA stated that he has talked with Mr. Haartz and recommended he install a culvert on his driveway where it flattens. Ditching on Upper Mad River Road is scheduled for summer 2007.

6:00 The Board moved to go into non-public session relative to a personnel issue. Present were the Board members and George Cheney 6:05 The Board returned to public session. It was moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session. PASSED (x3)

6:07 ADAPT. Sean McDaniel presented the Board with a budget request for ADAPT. He explained that Director, Sean O'Brien had a conflicting appointment. The funding requested is \$25,000 for 2007. Mr. McDaniel noted that major funding in the past has been through grants and they are becoming less available. More people are applying for the same monies. Many grants are for start up programs.

Selectman Perron inquired about details of the 2006 budget. Mr. McDaniel will research his questions and get back to the Board. He stated that the primary funding is for summer programs. Selectman Freeman requested financials and the budget for the past two years so that the Board can see the reducing revenue stream that is necessitating more local funding.

Selectman Perron inquired if ADAPT has met with Neighborfest. Mr. McDaniel stated that there has been a conversation. He did not know the details. It was requested that Sean O'Brien attend the next Selectmen's Meeting. Neighborfest is waiting for a response from the Selectmen and the Selectmen are waiting for a response from ADAPT.

6:20 Cookie Benton came before the Board relative to recognizing the oldest resident. Becky Pope is the oldest person living in the Town of Thornton. Mrs. Pope will be 98 on 3/27/07. Mr. & Mrs. Pope came here over 50 years ago and Mr. Pope served as Town Clerk and Treasurer for many years. Cookie suggested a photo and some message in the Town Report. Cookie will get a photo etc. The Board suggested that Cookie work with Marianne Peabody on the Town Report submission.

6:40 The Board briefly discussed last evenings meeting with the Campton and Ellsworth Selectmen and Campton Thornton Fire Department and Transfer Station. The Board will meet with the Campton Board of Selectmen and Fire Chief on 1/23/07 at 6:30 PM.

6:45 Tom Mullen and daughter Kelly Weiser came to the Selectmen to discuss Owl's Nest abatement applications. Mr. Mullen's goal is to elicit discussion between Owl's Nest and the Board of Selectmen to avoid continuing with the Board of Tax and Land Appeals (BTLA). Owl's Nest is considering withdrawing from the BTLA and going to Superior Court with the issue.

Mr. Mullen and Ms. Weiser gave several examples of what they consider to be errors and inequities. They shared with the Board interrogatories that have been requested of each of the property owners that they consider a duplication of information already available on the property cards.

Mr. Mullen stated that after the 2005 taxes came out Owl's Nest decided to sell land under buildings to the owners and then build the unit under another agreement for 90K-125K. Owl's Nest sells a lot of things that are not real estate as a bundled package, but they are being assessed at the maximum saleable amount.

Mr. Mullen and Ms. Weiser challenged Avitar's request to dismiss the appeals and argued that many of the points made are untrue. Mr. Mullen continued that Avitar is a hired firm and is supposed to represent the wishes of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Mullen stated it is time for the Selectmen to insert themselves into the process. Ms. Weiser stated she is requested a pre-hearing meeting of the parties.

Selectman Perron stated he would need to review the information. The Board agreed.

Mr. Mullen stated Pike has done a lot of smoothing in the former pit area. and they have roughed in a couple of golf holes.

7:15 Karl Haartz lives on Upper Mad River Road. Mr. Haartz stated water is coming down his driveway and onto the lawn. He thinks Adelpia took a berm out of the area. Mr. Haartz stated there is water running across the road, he has talked to the RA and Tom doesn't want to do anything there right now. Mr. Haartz scooped the ditches out some, but he would like to see the Town do something there in the spring. Selectman Freeman

stated that some re-grading and adding gravel to the road is already scheduled for this spring. Selectman Perron inquired how long it had been since Adelpia removed the berm? Mr. Haartz responded it was probably 4-5 years ago and road has gotten worse since. Mr. Haartz agreed that work would need to wait until spring and stated there is a community water system for the apartment buildings that is between his house and the 1st set of condominiums.

7:30 Alternative school addition suggestion. Jim Parziale stated his offering is purely in the interest of the taxpayers. He has been told that the price could be 1/4 to 1/3 of what has been discussed if they were to consider his alternative proposal. Mr. Parziale has not yet shown the plans to the School Board. Mr. Parziale stated he works with both the Capital Improvement Committee and Budget Committee.

Mr. Parziale presented an alternative school building plan to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Parziale asked to post his alternative in the Municipal Building. The Board denied his request. He will be going to an upcoming School Board meeting. Selectman Freeman agreed that the School Board needs to hear from people. It is the biggest investment in the town. Selectman Freeman continued that Mr. Parziale can provide the School Board information, and they can provide Mr. Parziale with information.

8:45 The Board discussed and decided on a 3% cost of living adjustment for 2007. PASSED (x3)

Selectman Freeman offered to coordinate the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation Scholarship. APPROVED (x3)

The Board requested Avitar come to a meeting to talk about Owl's Nest assessments.

The Board requested the Road Agent to see if he can pull some rocks out of the ditch line across from the Haartz property on Upper Mad River Road.

Old town house roof. It was moved to accept JKS Construction proposal for the roof's replacement as advertised. PASSED (x3)

Minutes of the December 28, 2006 and January 2, 2006 Selectmen's Meetings were approved as amended.

Selectman Freeman suggested recording a UCC filing for monies due to Burd Engineering with respect to the Mill Brook Survey project to have it on record. PASSED (x3) The TA is to ask town counsel the best method to be in line if need be.

9:20 There was a motion to adjourn. PASSED (x3)

**The next scheduled Selectmen's Meeting
Will be
January 16, 2007
5:30 PM at the Municipal Building**

(Amendment:to the 1/9/07 Selectmen's Minutes approved 1/31/07)

6:00 The following discussions took place inadvertently in non-public session.

1. Selectman Freeman addressed Chairman Gross and Selectman Perron relative to Selectman Freeman's Thornton residency. Selectman Freeman asked Selectman Gross and Perron if they had any issue with his residency. Selectman Perron asked Selectman Freeman if he was living in Thornton more than in Woodstock. Selectman Freeman responded YES. Selectman Gross and Perron stated that they were comfortable with that residency. Selectman Perron felt much more comfortable since Selectman Freeman's house was taken "off the market". Selectman Freeman said he was addressing this issue because he was tired of the rumors and retaliation and attempted intimidation from the Highway department employees. Selectman Freeman had been informed by the Superintendent of Schools for SAU 48 that Road Agent Tom Dubey had called Plymouth Regional High School Vice Principal Price relative to Freeman's residency.
2. Road Agency Tom Dubey was then brought in to non-public session. He was asked if he called the SAU office, the high school office, or if he had discussed the Freeman's residency with anyone related to the school. RA Tom Dubey emphatically denied having mentioned this and said, "I would never do anything that low".
3. Highway Employee George Cheney came to the board in non-public session with a copy of an RSA. The 3 Selectmen read the paper Mr. Cheney handed them. Mr. Cheney then said, "what are we going to do about this?". Chairman Gross said that he was tired of one department trying to single out a Selectman this way. Selectman Freeman explained to Mr. Cheney that his facts were wrong and that he should be more careful with his accusations. Mr. Cheney stated "Lee, you haven't lived in Thornton for more than a year". He said, "When I am plowing the roads, I only see one set of tracks coming out of your farm (in Woodstock)." Mr. Freeman said, "George, have you ever thought that I might be going in to feed my animals?" Mr. Freeman stated that he was not sure of Mr. Cheney's motivation but certainly understood that law and that Mr. Cheney was misinformed. Mr. Cheney said that Mr. Freeman was bringing shame to the town by lying about his residency, but that he was not the first to do this. Mr. Cheney also accused former Selectman Anne Marie Foote of living out of town (in Campton). Chairman Gross stated "you would think that a Thornton Highway Department employee would know where the town line is!" A short debate of the location of the town line at Rte 3 followed. Finally, Mr. Freeman invited Mr. Cheney up to his home "for a beer" if it would make Mr. Cheney feel more comfortable with Selectman Freeman's residency. Mr. Cheney declined the offer.
4. A vote was taken to enter public session. PASSED (x3)