

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
TOWN OF CONWAY, MA  
MINUTES  
February 7, 2011

**Meeting Open: 8:00PM**

**Present:** Maureen Chase, Jim Moore, Tom Spiro

**Others present:** John O'Rourke

**Appointments**

**8:00 Melanson & Heath presentation – Kevin Fox**

Maureen stated to Kevin that it was disconcerting to see a quote of \$15,000 for the Town's next audit coming up in April. Maureen reviewed the history of negotiations with Kevin for a possible 3 year auditing service before the Town contracted with his company. She said she, as did Chuck and Jim, remembered a discussion regarding an agreement about a 3-year deal in the range of \$12,000 to \$14,000 per year. She also said when it was advised that one year contracts were the way to go that \$12,000 was agreed upon for the first audit with the understanding that the previously mentioned price range would hold. Minutes from a negotiation meeting with Kevin were printed up that stated a conversation was held, with Kevin, and fees with a range of \$12,000 to \$14,000 were mentioned. Kevin refused to believe the conversation was held because of the wording of the minutes. He stated he never said that he agreed to the same price of \$12,000.00 for all 3 year services. He stated that this year's offered services for a FY2010 audit for \$15,000.00 was reasonable. Maureen said that the Town did not budget for anything more than the \$12,000.00 for FY2009 and no more than \$14,000 for the following 2 years. He said he priced FY2010 at what his costs would be. He claimed that he incurred \$7,000 more than charged for the last audit and he felt the \$15,000 for this next audit was fair and he said that he may take at loss at that rate. He also said that he had included consideration of working with a new Town accountant in arriving at the \$15,000 figure. Maureen said she understood that there had been a lot of "catching up" with the first audit and reminded Kevin that the Town called in the previous auditing service to help Melanson & Heath complete the 2009 audit at an additional cost of \$7000. She also stated that the Selectboard was going to annual audits to try to make the process easier and therefore less expensive. Kevin claimed that he spoke to Joyce Muka, who was currently doing the year-end statements and said that there were still many issues with the Town's books, which may drive up costs again as it did the previous year. Maureen told Kevin that the Board would make its decision regarding his proposal with a contract figure of \$15,000.00.

**8:30 Finance Committee – review of hearings so far; John O'Rourke, James Cabral.**

There was a discussion about the auditors and the history of our Town accountants. James then asked about the progress of the Capital Improvements Planning Committee. Maureen noted that there had been a change of membership, and also spoke about the \$10,000.00 cost limit requiring presentation of the proposed purchase to the Capital Improvements Committee. He tried to find out why progress had not been made. Maureen gave examples requests made in the past and appearing on the Town warrant without being submitted for committee approval and the lack of participation in the program. John suggested that the Selectboard invest \$75,000.00 for capital purchases in a stabilization fund. Maureen stated that she felt that should be done annually but noted that it would have to go into a stabilization account to meet DOR's recommendations. Maureen mentioned Bob Baker's inference that one piece of town construction equipment may need to be replaced shortly.

Maureen asked for a meeting with the Finance Committee, the Selectboard and the Personnel Committee to review the Personnel Bylaw for possible revisions for the upcoming Town meeting. There was a short discussion about how the Finance Committee was only concerned with the potential financial liabilities concerning personnel management. Maureen noted that she was drafting a possible article to this end clarifying and simplifying some things in the Bylaw for review at the suggested meeting of the three committees.

**meeting items**

- Warrants were signed.
- The minutes from 1/31/11 and 2/4/11 were approved as amended.

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- Tom spoke about the Board's ability to revoke an annual license if a tax agreement is not adhered to. Maureen said that there should be a notation made in any agreement that states that a license can be revoked if tax payments are not maintained.
- Bob Baker will be asked for options and a cost analysis that will analyze the potential purchase of new mowing equipment. This will be presented at the next Selectboard meeting.
- Tom gave an update on the search for a new Town accountant.
- Tom pointed out that the HRA Block grant would again be applied for with FRCOG assistance.

**Mail and Other Items**

- Mail items were reviewed.

**9:45 PM** Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Maureen, seconded by Jim, all in favor.