

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF CONWAY, MA
MINUTES
July 25, 2011

Meeting Open: The Select Board meeting was called to ordered at 7:00 PM

Present: Victor C. Trombley, Jim Moore, John O'Rourke

Others present: Laura Hutt, Lee Whitcomb

Appointments

7:00 PM Laura Hutt - Ms. Hutt came before the Select Board to discuss the birth of her child on September 15. The Personnel Committee had reviewed this matter and gave Ms. Hutt some guidance relative to specific criteria for maternity leave:

- Return to work: You may return whenever you feel is appropriate for you, but you must present a letter from your pediatric care giver that indicates that you are healthy enough to resume your employment duties.
- Bringing your child with you during work hours: You may be allowed to bring your baby to work, but this arrangement cannot continue beyond 3 months of age.
- Time off from your positions immediately preceding your child's birth: You may be allowed to take time off with prior approval from the Select Board. However, you are not eligible for Family Leave time or other benefits and will not be paid for this time.

Ms. Hutt and Ms. Whitcomb discussed these matters with the Select Board. Since this type of situation is a rarity among Town employees and there is no formal policy in place, the Select Board agreed to be flexible within context of the appropriate federal and Commonwealth laws relating to these matters.

Walk-in

7:30 PM Ken Ouimette - Mr. Ouimette stopped in to inform the Select Board that the installation of the new boiler in the Town Hall was completed. The Select Board decided that a site inspection of the new boiler was in order and went to the Town Hall to view the new boiler, other heating system work completed and listen to a brief explanation from Mr. Ouimette on the features of the new system.

Meeting items

- The warrants were signed.
- Minutes for the July 11 Select Board meeting were approved.
- Reviewed and discussed plans and documents from the Mass Department of Transportation concerning the North Poland Road bridge project. A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to sign the documents. Reviewed the planned land donations in connection with this matter. A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the donations.
- Reviewed the Commonwealth contract and reimbursement for the Town Hall boiler project. A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to sign the contract.
- Reviewed and discussed a Wired West document requiring some changes to the original voting procedure for the Wired West Warrant Article that was passed at the Special Town Meeting on January 31, 2011 and the Annual Town Meeting on April 11, 2011. New votes will be required on this matter in future meetings. A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to conform to the required voting procedure in this document.
- Reviewed the completed one day liquor license for the annual Bridge Dinner to be held on September 24, 2011.
- Reviewed and discussed the proposed subject areas for a Special Town Meeting in October 2011.

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- Reviewed and discussed the membership of the Town in the Massachusetts Municipal Association. A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to continue the membership of the Town in this Association.
- John reported that he and Police Chief Ken Ouimette were on hand with Commonwealth Guardrail at 7:30 AM on Friday, July 22, to insure the proper installation of the barrier fencing on top of the culvert wall off Bardwell's Ferry Road as the final piece of construction to complete the Bardwell's Ferry Road slope failure project. John inspected and approved the completed fence at 12:00 PM. Chief Ouimette was also there at 12:00 PM
- John reported on his meeting with Mr. Ralph Osgood at 1:30 PM on Saturday, July 23, concerning easement relocation along E. Guinea and Main Poland Roads.
- John proposed that the Select Board do an on-site meeting with Mr. Ralph Osgood to discuss some options concerning easement relocation along E. Guinea and Main Poland Roads. John proposed a tentative meeting for Saturday, July 30, at 1:00 PM.
- John reviewed his answer to the email of Mr. Craig Warner concerning communications and accounting problems existing in the Town. John assured Mr. Warner that through a very comprehensive plan formulated by the Board of Selectmen, it has literally taken advantage of every opportunity available to it from the local to the Commonwealth level to improve the accounting and financial system for the Town. An outline of the steps in this plan is as follows:

1. It was decided that continuing to hire Town Accountants as the Town had in the past was not in the best interest of the Town and would not help solve the accounting problems. The Board of Selectmen decided to contract with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) to provide accounting services through their Town Accounting Program. This program services small communities with qualified professionals to provide the services required to meet current accounting standards and increasingly complex program demands. The Board of Selectmen saw this as an important step to insure both the continuity and integrity of the Town accounting system and the resulting financial reports. Ms. Joyce Muka, FRCOG Municipal Accounting Program Manager, started aligning the Town's chart of accounts with the Massachusetts Uniform Chart of Accounts in June. Starting at the beginning of July, she started the conversion of the Town accounting system to the FRCOG accounting system. This conversion is expected to be completed by the end of September.

One of the primary reasons for making this switch is to provide all department heads and committee chairs with monthly financial reporting which will start as soon as the conversion is complete. John reported that he had met with Joyce Muka on two occasions and has complete confidence that the conversion is on track and that department heads and committee chairs will have monthly reports starting with the July report.

2. The Board of Selectmen advertised for a Town Treasurer, which is a three-quarter time position. There were 8 – 10 qualified responders. The Board of Selectmen, with the assistance of members of the Personnel Committee and the Tax Collector, reviewed the resumes and selected 3 very qualified candidates to interview. The candidate selected by this Selection Committee, Ms. Gina Sieber, accepted the position as Treasurer and started May 31. John reported that by all accounts that he has heard, Ms. Sieber is doing a very good job.

3. The Board of Selectmen have retained a new auditor, Roselli, Clark & Associates, Certified Public Accountants, a firm highly qualified in the area of municipal government audits. They will be performing an audit of FY2011 during the months of October and November 2011.

4. The Board of Selectmen applied for the Financial Management Assistance Program from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR), Division of Local Services (DLS). This program will provide the Town of Conway, at no cost, with 3 months of comprehensive financial consulting services know as a Financial Management Review. This Review will be an in depth study of the Town's financial operations and condition to determine its strengths and weaknesses. The Division of Local Services assistance team examines revenues, expenditures, reserves, fixed costs, debt,

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economic and demographic factors, and management operations that affect a local government's financial condition. Included will be in depth interviews with the Assessor, Tax Collector, Treasurer, Accountant, Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen. The DOR/DLS will provide the Town of Conway with a comprehensive report with recommendations for changes to improve all areas of our accounting and financial system. This will help the Board of Selectmen make important decisions in these areas. They are scheduled to start the Financial Management Review in December.

Mail and Other Items

- Mail items were reviewed.

Next meeting will be 08/08/2011

8:45 PM Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Jim, seconded by John, all in favor.