

**NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF July 20, 2010**

Present: Sel. Bluhm, Sel. Knowlton, Sel. Ziminsky  
Also Present: George Flanders, Madalene Dunlop, Debra Mekula, Elizabeth Coneau, Ronald Dunlop, William Keyser, Cathy Keyser, Regina Nadeau, Katheren Belle, John O'Shaughnessy, Catherine Ferreira, Nancy Brown, Matt Prince, Dennis Lynch, John Raffaely, David Liberatore, Kevin Waldron, Joe DeMello, Donna Rhodes, Wayne Crowley, Chief Carrier, Mike Summersett, Chief Adams, Glenn Smith,

The Chair opened the meeting at 6:30 pm

**1. Public Appointments**

The Chair reviewed the work of the Energy Committee and recognized Wayne Crowley who presented the Energy Committee's recommendation for removal of 34 of the 101 streetlights in town. Mr. Crowley reviewed the criteria used by the Committee and noted that each light costs \$110 per year to operate.

Deborah Mekula of Glines Park Road said she feels that the light at the corner of Sandogardy Pond Road should not be removed as it lights an area used by children waiting for the school bus, which can occur in the dark during winter months. Also she feels that it provides a degree of security given the registered pedophile in the area. John Raffaely expressed concern about removal of lights on Cofran, Howard and Cottage streets, implying that the removal of these lights would result in more break ins.

Catherine Ferreira expressed concerns about the cleaning up of broken streetlight bulbs and said that without streetlights people would be afraid to come out of their homes.

Joe DeMello said that when he moved up to Northfield he chose to live on Howard Avenue because of the streetlights and that the proposal will put his whole hill in darkness. He contended that according to his calculations the streetlights cost him only \$0.72 per year and he would like to see them stay.

Kevin Waldron said that where there are sidewalks there should be lights, but questioned whether we need a light on every pole.

Ronald Dunlop reported that until recently his son walked home along Cofran Avenue. He is glad his son did not have to walk in the dark and thinks the lights add to the safety of the area. He also reported that there are a number of questionable activities occurring at the trailhead of the Smart Conservation area and would like a light at that location.

John O'Shaughnessy stated that he thought it was cheap and petty to remove streetlights, the lights add to his property value. He would like to see sidewalks constructed on Cofran Avenue and thinks the town should look elsewhere to save money.

Joe DeMello reported that in the winter people can't get up Howard Avenue and often slide backwards down the hill in their cars. Without street lights they will not be able to see where

they are going.

Catherine Ferreira inquired as to whether crime had decreased in Northfield. Chief Adams reported that it had not.

John Raffaely asked if this matter should be discussed at town meeting. Sel. Bluhm responded that this meeting is just to find out what people think.

A resident asked if the Energy Committee had researched what was done in other towns. Wayne Crowley responded that Meredith had removed 1/3 of their lights with no impact on the crime rate and that Franklin had removed about half of their streetlights.

Kevin Waldron noted that if it is true that street lights prevent crime then we should put streetlights on Peverly, Shaw, Oak Hill Roads. He is hearing that there is crime on Howard Ave even though there are streetlights there.

Wayne Crowley asked the audience if they thought installing timers on the streetlights might be a good idea. There was a positive response to this idea.

The Chair closed the discussion of streetlight removal and recessed the meeting at 7:15 pm to allow people the chance to gather information and leave the room if they didn't want to stay for the rest of the meeting.

The Chair reconvened the meeting at 7:30 pm.

The Chair recognized Cathy Keyser who explained her request that police officers be allowed to volunteer to provide security for her fundraiser party. She indicated that the practice has been going on for 5 years. This year she was told by the Chief that this was no longer allowed and that she would be subject to the special detail rate if she wanted police security for a private party. Ms. Keyser said she couldn't afford to pay for the security and asked that the fee be waived. It is important to her that there is someone with a badge and a gun to keep the peace at the party. Board members discussed that they had been in contact with counsel and had been told that it was a violation of labor law for the town to be a party to employees volunteering to perform their assigned tasks; if they perform these duties they must be paid. Additionally, the town would be responsible for any liability arising out of volunteer officers performing their work duties at this private party. Alternative solutions were discussed. It was noted that if these officers wished to donate their time they could be paid and simply donate their pay to the fundraiser. Sel. Ziminsky noted that he would be open to a lower special detail rate for this event.

## **2. Town Clerk**

Town Clerk Cindy Caveney reviewed information on unregistered dogs in Northfield. She estimates that there could be as many as 400 such dogs. Under statute these dogs were to have been registered in April. Under the policy adopted by the Selectmen earlier this year she is to notify the owner of each unregistered dog of their responsibility to register the animal, with penalties assessed if the dog is not registered within 15 days. She advised the Board to expect adverse reaction to this policy. **Knowlton/Ziminsky** moved to authorize the Chief of Police, working with the Town Clerk, to issue a civil forfeiture for each unlicensed dog under the provisions of RSA 466:14. **Motion passed.**

The Chair recognized Barb and David Foster and Regina Nadeau, counsel for the Fosters. Speaking on behalf of her clients, Ms. Nadeau reviewed the situation relating to her efforts to remove the restriction attached to lot U7-71-1 when it was created in 1986 that it was an unbuildable lot to be merged with the Foster's existing lot. Ms. Nadeau contended that it was the Town's responsibility to enact this merger, not the Fosters, and that the Town failed to do so. Ms. Foster presented minutes of a 1986 meeting; she contends that the Selectboard had acknowledged that this was a separate lot at a meeting in 2004. Sel. Knowlton noted that even if this was true then this does not mean that the lot is buildable, given the comment on the Mylar in 1986. Ms. Nadeau noted that she felt the Planning Board had erred by not providing a written notice of its recent decision in this matter. Discussion followed.

Planning Board Chair Crowley expressed concerns that the Board may not have the jurisdiction to rescind the restriction placed on the property in 1986. Ms. Nadeau responded that the Board can amend the 1986 decision to remove the restriction. David Foster noted that the reason that the lot was proposed by the subdivider to be unbuildable was to allow the subdivider to circumvent the requirements for a major subdivision; he should not be held to this restriction. Mr. Crowley agreed to research the Planning Board's jurisdiction in this matter, put the matter on the next agenda and report back to the Fosters.

### **3. Tilton/Northfield Fire Department**

The Chair recognized Chief Carrier who reviewed recent activities. In response to a question from Sel Ziminsky at a previous meeting, Chief Carrier reported that the Police Department has not had a formal fire inspection, town hall had received an assembly inspection in 2008 for the upstairs room only and the Highway Garage was inspected in 2008. He updated the Board on problems with ambulances, the rebuilt Shaker Road dry hydrant, repairs to the Park Street station, and fire prevention issues. Board members inquired as to the status with call firefighters.

### **4. Highway Department**

Mike reported the condition of Union Church and updated the Board on his efforts to purchase a used sander for the new truck. He has found a used unit in great condition for \$2,500. Consensus of the Board was to buy sander as proposed. Mike updated the Board on the status of a failing culvert on Silver Lane. The culvert is large and buried 8 to 9 feet deep. He will try to line the culvert before exploring a replacement option.

Board members discussed the Bean Hill Road project with Glenn and Mike. QCC has proposed a phased project schedule, but the match for Phase I is still above what is currently available for this project. Glenn was asked to find out if Lisa could attend the next meeting.

### **5. Police Department**

Chief Adams reported that the motorcycle has more than 1,000 miles on it. It is used for four to five shifts per week.

The Chief presented purchase requisitions for summer tires and firearms training. Board members discussed the need for out-of-state firearms training and took the matter under advisement.

Chief Adams updated the Board on law enforcement issues.

The Chair recognized Dennis Lynch who asked for permission on behalf of the Tilton Northfield Little League to regrade the ball field. Board members agreed on the condition that a formal request is received from the head of the organization

The Chair recognized Kevin Waldron who inquired as to the replacement of the ramp on the Island Bridge.

## **6. Town Administration**

Glenn reviewed the DES report on water quality of Sandogardy Pond. He also asked the Board about the potential use of the Salt Shed Fund on behalf of the Trustee of Trust Funds. After discussion it was decided that these monies needed to be available in the short term for use.

Glenn and Mike reviewed their meeting with Janet Beecher on Cofran Avenue concerning a drainage easement across her property. After discussion Board members indicated that the town would be open to marking Ms. Beecher's property boundaries as a condition of this project.

**Ziminsky/Knowlton** moved to enter into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A3II (b) at 10:10 pm. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.** Present at the non-public session were Matthew Prince, Chief Adams, Glenn Smith. **Knowlton/ Ziminsky** moved that the minutes of the non-public session be sealed. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.** **Knowlton/ Ziminsky** moved to reconvene the public session at 10:50 pm. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.**

Board members resumed the discussion Cathy Keyser's request for security at her party. By consensus it was agreed that no officers would be stationed at the party and that the town cannot be party to officers agreeing to perform their assigned work duties without compensation. However, the officers on duty that day can drop in periodically to check if requested by Ms. Keyser in advance. The Board asked Chief Adams to discuss the options for police presence with Ms. Keyser and report back to the board by the next meeting.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 pm.

ACCEPTED BY THE NORTHFIELD SELECTBOARD ON AUGUST 3, 2010