

Minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting 13 November 2012

Members present: R. Stephen Leighton, Chairman and Lynn Sweet

The meeting was called to order at 6:06PM

In attendance: Judy Dupré, Martha English, Carolyn Clarke, Davis Clarke, Ken Berry, Charles Burnham

Minutes from the October 16, 2012 Selectmen's meeting were read and approved.

Correspondence was reviewed, discussed, and signed as necessary. Correspondence included commendations to Greg Messenger and crew for the "fine job" they do in maintaining Barn Door Gap Road. The same letter expressed opposition to any future consideration for paving that road. A second letter commended the efforts of Town employees and officials for the efficiency with which the recent election was carried out. The Selectmen followed up on correspondence that they had sent out addressing a situation of unauthorized trash being taken to the Strafford Recycling Center.

Payment of bills and payroll was authorized.

The Selectmen approved the nomination for Kevin LaCroix as Health Officer.

Members of the Strafford Library Association and Library Trustees discussed with the Selectmen the draft of a proposed warrant article which would transfer ownership of the Hill Library to the Town of Strafford. At present, the SLA owns the land and the building itself, and the Town owns the library's collection. In the proposed warrant article, the library would revert to the SLA should the Library discontinue using it, but a prior deed clearly states that the property would revert to the Town in that event. The Town attorney will review the proposed warrant article and deed.

Some discussion followed about the history of the library and the role, current and future, of the Strafford Library Association. The library building was constructed by the SLA on land donated by the Hill family using money from donations and fundraising. They recently put on a new roof and feel they are transferring a well maintained property to the Town. In reviewing their expenses for the last 12 years, they estimated that ongoing maintenance would likely add \$500 to the library's current operating budget. A persistent drainage problem was recently alleviated by a Boy Scout project. Looking to the future, the SLA would like to become a "Friends of the Library" group, concentrating their efforts on supporting programs for the library, as many surrounding towns have done with success. They would continue to do fundraising for the library and are hopeful the new status will attract a larger and more diverse group of people. The elected trustees would be responsible for the maintenance of the building.

The group briefly discussed the changing nature of libraries and the efforts the staff is making to address those changes.

The Library Trustees would like to see a capital reserve fund established for the purpose of future improvements to the library.

Carolyn Clarke and Martha English representing a local group seeking to provide rides to medical appointments to the elderly and disabled gave the Selectmen an update on the progress of their work. They had hoped that a private donation to Lamprey Health Care in July would give the effort a jump start, but there is a concern about their ability to provide the anticipated service. Their goal is to begin a program with volunteer drivers in January 2013, and they will be recruiting drivers. They are looking for funding, and with the help of neighboring towns and the Lion's Club, they are doing some fundraising. They will make a presentation about the program at the Town Meeting in March 2013.

At this time a motion was made by R. Stephen Leighton and seconded by Lynn Sweet to enter into a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a). Roll call was taken as follows:

R Stephen Leighton – Aye, Lynn Sweet – Aye.

The Board entered non-public session at 6:55 P.M.

A motion was made by R. Stephen Leighton to leave non-public session and seconded by Lynn Sweet to return to public session. Roll call was taken as follows:

R Stephen Leighton – Aye, Lynn Sweet – Aye.

One decision was made during non-public session.

Public session reconvened at 7:07 P.M.

After a short discussion it was clarified that Fire Road 9 will remain Fire road 9 in its entirety.

The State has set the preliminary tax rate. The School's rate is down slightly, the county tax is higher, and the Town's portion will be slightly higher due in large part to the purchase of the Hill property adjacent to the library. The Selectmen have requested that all departments present a flat line budget.

The Selectmen's Office has agreed to provide information to Brian La Pine from Unified Energy to see if the Town could benefit from a cooperative effort with neighboring towns to reduce supply charges on our electric bill.

Judy Dupré presented some preliminary numbers for back taxes and interest due on a piece of property that the Town recently took. The procedure and timeline for what will follow was discussed. Judy will report back to the Selectmen when she has finished putting together all the information.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board a motion was made, seconded, and voted to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:25.