

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
TOWN OF CONWAY, MA  
MINUTES - DRAFT  
Sept. 21, 2009

**Meeting Open: 7:00PM**

**Present:** Maureen Chase, Jack Lochhead, Tom Spiro

**Others Present:**

**Appointments**

**7:20 Broadband Committee** – Bob Armstrong, John O'Rourke, Satch Lampron, Andy Smith, John Pearsall, Chuck Meyer, Walter Kurkulonis, Cindi Barshov, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Culver, Bill McCullough, Stein Feick.

Bob asked the Board if they would mind speaking about public access regarding PEG money and local broadcasts of meetings. Bob mentioned that there will be a Comcast draft contract sent by Comcast to review soon. There was discussion regarding negotiating additional coverage for PEG money. Maureen noted that the open meeting law may be in conflict with privacy laws with regular broadcasts but she stated she had no objection to broadcasting meetings when possible. It was noted that meetings could be recorded and placed on the web site. John said that PEG money could be used for other items. Andy noted that there would be a meeting with Steve Kulik to talk about legislative issues. Bob asked if the committee could hire a legal specialist for negotiations and contract/licensing paperwork with Comcast. He said an estimate of approximately \$2,000.00 was given to him by someone who has worked with this type of negotiation and licensing. Jack noted that Town Council would not be expert in these types of proceedings and therefore felt the use of a "specialist" legal council would be best. Maureen agreed and it was then determined there might be money available from the legal budget account. Tom will talk to the Town Treasurer to see if there is enough in the account to cover this cost. There may be a state appointed person that could help prepare for negotiation and this resource will be researched.

Bob noted that there may be less money available from the feds to the state and he asked about other monies that might be available for the "last mile" coverage if needed. Maureen said that there could be research done concerning grant money to assist for this coverage. Bob did not know how much would be needed, and Jack suggested that a warrant article could be written for the next Town Meeting. Bob stated the Committee was concerned that residents who already had coverage may not support this request. Bob said that he would research the costs involved and would present this figure to the Board later on. Bob thought it might be wise to hire a consultant to plan a wireless system. He asked if the Board would support this idea as well. Maureen stated that the ideal outcome of all this would be complete coverage for all citizens of Conway and Jack concurred. Jack again suggested that plans continue and it might be possible to request the necessary funding at the next Town Meeting. Maureen said she felt research and planning needed to be done while waiting until the state makes a Broadband drop in Town before determining what is needed for household connections. Tom will ask FRCOG if there was any more grant money available for last mile funding. It was noted that there probably was not further funding but Maureen stated that it didn't hurt anything to ask.

John reviewed his schedule of events and spoke about Comcast contract notices. There was talk about deadlines and extensions. Maureen requested scenarios regarding Comcast negotiations over the next few months. Bob noted that there will be another public hearing to review what was offered by Comcast when Conway received the proposal from Comcast.

Jack asked if internet access be made available to those in need and comment was made that it would be like subsidizing phone service.

**8:10 Elizabeth Braccia, Jan Warner** – Town Accountant

Liz spoke how Chris Martin had not responded to numerous requests for finalizing figures for submission to DOR and as part of the recap process. DOR had given their approval to move forward on the recap without Chris's input. Liz stated that she was frustrated with poor response from Mr. Martin and that she really would like to step down as the Assistant Accountant as her schedule was very full. The Board discussed alternatives to the current accounting process and it was decided that the Town needed an accountant who could be on site at least one day a week. Maureen and Jack reminded everyone that Mr. Martin said he was not available for on site hours. After discussing the

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problems and issues it was decided that the Town should advertise for an accountant who could be on site as needed. Maureen said that she thought Mr. Martin should be informed directly about this decision and she would call him on his cell phone and let him know of this decision. There was concern that he would not answer or respond to her call. If he does not respond in 24 hours then a registered letter would be sent informing him of the decision. Maureen stated she hoped he would answer because the Board felt it polite to speak with him personally.

**8:20 Joe McGranaghan** – update on grammar school building envelop repair

Joe handed out a schedule of future committee meetings and invited the Board to attend at their discretion. There was talk about the company who was hired to perform the design phase. Joe gave details about the design firm's findings, including air and contact samplings. Thermal imaging would be done soon. He had no idea what the final costs would be. Joe noted that there would be three design solutions presented as options to choose from. It was agreed that the School Committee should make the decision on what option to choose with input from the SB and Finance Committee. This will simplify things at Town Meeting. Jim Bosman arrived and was given Joe's information packet, and was brought up to speed. Jim noted that Tom Shaw's matrix of vendors was very well done.

Joe also noted that regionalizing the school system would cost approximately an additional \$250,000.00 annually. There was a general discussion about regionalization and costs involved. Everyone agreed that regionalization was not the best solution for Conway grammar school and possible alternatives were mentioned such as becoming a charter school. Joe will give an update on this topic at a later time. Joe and Jack will attend the regionalization meeting on Thursday evening.

**meeting items**

- Meeting minutes for 9/8/09 were approved with amendments.
- The warrant was signed.
- A discussion with Ed Baranowski was reviewed concerning a discuss of differences regarding the BFR Slope project. There was no settlement as of yet but will be shortly. Mr. Tanny would be invited in to meet with the Board to settle his differences.
- It was reported that the Housing Committee was questioning that Conway Conserves had taken responsibilities re insulation which the Housing Committee felt was their territory. It was suggested that Housing be brought in to discuss the issues.
- The need for Windows quilts for Town buildings was discussed. Tom will price them for the Town Offices and Town Hall.
- Tom explained the necessity for the meetings needed to meet requirements for the Town's block grant application.
- Tom explained that there was weeding that needed to be done at the memorial common in preparation for the Festival. Tara Guild had donated many hours performing this work but requested help, and Tom said that he had made several inquiries with the Girl Scout troops and others.

**Mail and Other Items**

- other mail items as per agenda

**9:20 PM** Motion to continue meeting on Wed. 9/25/09 at 7:30PM at the Town Hall in conjunction with the Assessors to approve Recap numbers for submission to the DOR was made by Maureen, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jack, all in favor.