

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF CONWAY, MA
MINUTES - DRAFT
October 13, 2009

Meeting Open: 7:00PM

Present: Maureen Chase, Jack Lochhead, Chuck Trombley, Tom Spiro

Others Present:

Appointments

7:00 Festival of the Hills – Kate van Cort -

Kate reviewed this year's Festival and how happy she was with its success. She said \$10,100 was raised in 2008 for scholarships and an equal amount was raised this year.

Kate stated that she wanted to rearrange the Board of Trustees by adding a 6th member and a Trustee secretary. The need to expand the Festival Board may be independent of the need to require Selectboard approval and Tom will research Town records to find out what the requirements may be.

Kate requested that the Selectboard attend one or more Festival Board meetings during the coming year to give visible support to the Festival. This would help moral within the committee. She also requested that the Board consider attending the Festival in 2010. Board members responded by saying that if attendance worked with their personal schedules then they would attend. Chuck stated he was working that day but did make an appearance. He stated that work comes first. Maureen stated that she and her husband had been taking their vacation the first week of October for the past 12 years and it was an annual event they both were reluctant to change. Jack stated that he was away on family activities.

She asked if the Highway Department was asked to store the information booth outside. Kate complained that the committee was never asked where they preferred it to be stored or where some of these other materials should be kept within the Town Office basement. There was a discussion about where items should be stored, and what responsibility Town employees and Committee members have around Festival. Jack stated that the information booth had long been a source of friction between the Highway Department and the Festival Committee, and that requests had been made to obtain a lighter and easier to maintain structure. It was suggested that the information booth might be stored against the back of the Town Hall under a tarp. Kate stated that she will clean out old Festival items from the Town Office basement. The Board reminded her, as did Mr. Spiro, that there were other departments who had belongings stored in the basement and those departments should be informed if any of their materials needed or were to be moved for access etc.

Kate will resign as chair of the Board. She recommended Jean Kidwall and Michelle Harris Diazilo as replacements. Kate mentioned that she was interested in marketing the Festival events to increase attendance and participation. Jack recommended that Kate speak to Ken with regard to managing larger crowds and parking problems if they increase their marketing efforts in the future. Parking would be an issue, and the Rose field was discussed as a possible option. Maureen suggested that the Rose field might be a problem if the area that was freshly harvested was used. She was concerned that there would be the need to tow cars out of mud if the weather was nasty and wet. Kate also added that the parking signs that were difficult to see and read would be made larger and more visible for next year. It was mentioned that Ed Rose might consider using some of his land as a parking area for a parking fee.

8:30 Highway Department – burn permits, new hire, tree issues, Town seal

Bob informed the Board that dispatch will no longer give out burn permits as of January 2010. Bob attended a Fireman's Association meeting about this matter just before coming before the Board meeting tonight. It was suggested that Towns use an online permitting system which was estimated to cost \$2,600 per year to administer and \$100 per Town through the Fire Chiefs Association. Jack asked if a sign could be posted in town to alert people of daily burning conditions and if burning would be permitted in lieu of paper permits being issued. Bob said that state law mandated each fire have authorization via permit so it would not be legal to use that method. Bob mentioned that the last year Baker's Country Store handled requests and issued burning permits that 650 burning permit requests were processed through the store. Jack suggested that the store might benefit from foot traffic to

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make it beneficial to the store and alleviate the need for compensation. It was agreed that handling burning permits was time consuming and disruptive at times so compensation might be considered. Another option mentioned was hiring someone to sit at the Fire House to answer phones for two hours a day. Any permitting location should be open 7 days a week during the permitting months. It was discussed that perhaps a permit fee might cover the cost of the phone coverage. Another idea suggested by Bob would be to sell a yearly permit. He said Greenfield does this at a charge of \$25.00. The purchaser calls in each day they are going to burn to notify officials that a fire would be going. There again, someone would be needed to take those calls. It was agreed that the suggested internet system would not be a good solution because Conway had so many unable to access the internet at this time. It was agreed that a decision should be made soon and sometime in November.

Rick Sumner's Worker's Compensation case was discussed. He had recently been awarded disability retirement status and the date noted was August 2008. The Board told Bob that they want to fill a position with someone to be his assistant and/or replacement when he retires. Bob wanted to hire someone soon to plow snow. Maureen said that Rick's position would be eliminated and replaced with this new assistant when the time came. The new position will be advertised and the job description Chuck compiled will be used for this purpose.

Bob asked the Board to approve the cost of tree removal from Claude Blair's yard. Bob felt that the tree was a threat to his house and well being. Jack suggested that a trust fund could be used to pay for this seeing as Mr. Blair was unable to have the job done otherwise. Jack noted that the Conway Conserves was already looking at helping with his roof and heating system. It was agreed that the Whiting Street fund could be used in this case.

Half of a tree belonging to Helen Reed tree came down on Joyce's Greenwood's property just in back of the Town Office. The two neighbors claimed that salt from snow plowing had killed both trees behind the parking lot. Bob stated that the back parking lot and driveway were sanded and salted all winter so it was possible that contributed to the death of the tree. The Board agreed to cut down the remainder of the tree with permission from Helen Reed because it could fall onto Town property and the back parking lot. Bob will use Jim's Tree Service when they are in town. Tom volunteered to remove the downed section of tree from Ms. Greenwood's yard.

Bob presented a new design for the Town seal that he would like to use on the new fire truck. The Board approved his request and chose the color scheme. Tom will write a letter giving the Town written permission to use Mr. Moore's sketch and Bob will ask Mr. Moore to sign it just to verify Mr. Moore has no objections to the Town using the sketching for the seal or possibly other Town purposes.

Bob was asked about the Festival information booth and it's storage outside for the last year. It was determined that a previous Selectboard member instructed Bob to remove it from the sheep barn and store it somewhere and did not exclude the out of doors. There was more discussion regarding storage of the booth. It was agreed that storage and care of this building was the committee's responsibility, but as a courtesy, Bob will ask Ed Lareau if the Town can have access across his driveway so the building can be stored behind the Town Hall if possible. If permission is not granted then responsibility and location for storing the building will shift back to the committee.

Jack gave a report to Bob regarding the Bardwells Ferry Road Slope project and the latest problems with two of the abutters. These abutters requested re-engineering that would change how the drainage and the final configuration of the project is laid out. This might necessitate further approvals from DEP but the Conservation Commission suggested DEP approval may not be needed and we may not have to be asked for further approval. There was more discussion regarding how to address the abutter's concerns regarding changes to the proposed design without going to extraordinary expense. A discussion ensued about where the Town could possible get the funding for this project. Jack suggested, and it was agreed that a procedure be written with what steps to take in future under similar circumstances.

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meeting items

- Meeting minutes for 9/28/09 and 10/5/09 were approved as amended.
- Chuck reminded the rest of the Board that the snow blower shed was being built and would be ready soon.
- Tom reviewed items for the 8:30PM appointment with Bob Baker.
- There was discussion regarding various issues involving the Treasurer. It was agreed that she would be asked to see the Board at their next meeting to discuss these issues.
- Tom noted that the EECBG Sub-Grant application that was now available. Tom will acquire more information with regard to completing and filing the application after an online primer is held on 10-14-09.
- The Board considered applicants for the position of Town Accountant. It was decided that interviews for all would be arranged.
- The Board approved Maureen to sign the Cultural Council grant forms.
- The Board decided that filing fees for raffle permits will stay the same.
- No one is available to attend the next SB Association meeting.
- The Board decided not to sign the MEGA insurance settlement authorization form until Town Council or someone with expertise in these matters gives his opinion.

Mail and Other Items

- other mail items as per agenda

10:05 PM

Motion to adjourn by Maureen, 2nd by Jack, all in favor.