

Town of Milton
Board of Selectman Meeting
Tuesday February 17th, 2015
Milton Town Hall
Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance: Chairman Tom Gray, Mike Beaulieu, Andrew Rawson, Elizabeth Dionne, Town Administrator **Also in Attendance:** Toni McLellan, Recording Clerk

Public in Attendance: Michelle Beauchamp, Timothy Long, Janice Long, Bob Carrier, Cynthia Copeland, Richard Krauss, Eric Knapp, Gerald Coogan, Nick Marique, Larry Brown, John Katwick

Chairman Gray called the meeting to order at 6:03pm and welcomed everyone.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

New Business

Timothy Long Re: Speed Limit on Applebee Road - Chairman Gray read a letter from Timothy and Janice Long. They are proposing to install a 30mph sign located 100 yards after the intersection of Route 125 on Applebee Road and also to remove the 40mph sign and place it 300 yards after the intersection of Carleton and Branch Hill Roads with Applebee Rd. In addition, coming from Milton Mills, they propose that a 30mph sign be placed 300 yards from Carleton and Branch Hill Road and leaving the warning signs as they are presently placed. J. Long stated that there is very low visibility in this area and it is not safe. Many cars have gone off the road here. Chairman Gray also read a letter from Kari Lygren (who was unable to be present this evening) regarding the same issue. In the letter, K. Lygren states that she is in favor of lowering the speed limit at least on the west end of Applebee Road. She often finds in winter that she cannot see around the snowbanks and has to creep out slowly onto Applebee Road from Carlton Road not having full visibility until she reaches the center line. She stated that this is through no fault of the snowplowing efforts of either the Town of Milton or the state, but rather the way the road is banked in both directions.

Chief Krauss stated that the town would have a hard time getting the state to reduce the speed limit in this area to 30mph. The homes are too far apart to be considered for a residential 30mph (based on the RSA which determines what speed limits can be set and where). However, the state may be willing to lower the speed limit by 5mph. He felt another way to approach this would be to request (if the state is not willing to reduce the speed limit in this area) that a convex mirror be installed so that cars could be seen coming down the road. This has helped similar traffic

situations in other areas. Traffic warning signs can also be placed in the area to get motorists to slow down before reaching this traffic area. The decision was that the BOS would ask for a 35mph speed limit and for the convex mirror to be installed. E. Dionne will construct a letter to this effect. Chief Krauss will work with E. Dionne on wording of the letter.

Gerald Coogan Re: ERZ Program – The ERZ program was established to stimulate economic redevelopment, expand the commercial and industrial base, create new jobs, reduce sprawl, and increase tax revenues within the state by encouraging economic revitalization in designated areas. There are 50 communities that are participants in the ERZ program and the program has a cap of \$875,000 in business credits/year. G. Coogan asked that the BOS review the proposed area for Milton (he provided a map to the Town Administrator and the BOS) and vote on whether to submit the application. The major parcel under consideration is Tax Map 42, Lot 128 (the former Ray's Marina site), but a list of about 19 properties starting with Ray's Marina and heading south from there (adjacent lots to Ray's Marina, Lots 129 and 130-137 and Lots 109-117) were also included. These lots are all contiguous and basically comprise downtown Milton. The primary benefit to the town is that the ERZ designation is another tool in the Town's economic development marketing "toolbox". It will help revitalize and bring business to the area. Once the zone is designated, the individual (business) makes the appeal to the state. The bank is motivated to sell this property in Milton. They have reduced the price. G. Coogan is working with Gary Chabot at NH DRED and he approves of the application. G. Coogan is asking for authorization to submit the application to the ERZ. He will need to include the minutes from this meeting with the application.

M. Beaulieu made a motion to grant authorization to G. Coogan to submit the application for the ERZ. A. Rawson seconded. Motion carried.

Chairman Gray stated that the ERZ is an excellent program.

Cynthia Copeland, SRPC Re: Economic Development and Annual Dues - In 2005, a study was conducted analyzing the cost of community services. The study analyzed the impact on taxes for community services. E. Dionne had contacted C. Copeland to determine if this study would be a possibility again as things have changed in the past 10 years and the BOS wished to compare 2005 data to 2015. C. Copeland did some work on the cost of community service studies. Many of the studies were conducted during the height of the housing boom in northern New England, but in particular in NH and MA. She conducted a search to see if anyone had made a determination as to how effective/useful these studies have been. She found a study conducted by the University of Colorado and the University of California at Santa Barbara, and published by Yale. They did an analysis of every cost of community service study done in the U.S. in the 1990's through approximately 2009. She also looked at the Milton study and a study conducted by Rochester NY (it is one of the best studies she found). Essentially, she feels that

looking at the cost of community services will not give the BOS the information they are looking for because this issue is a very complicated issue. For example, density and median home value had no effect on residential ratios. Given what she found, C. Copeland felt that municipalities should not use this vehicle to answer the questions. Municipalities should be looking at overall budget balance for all types of land use.

Chairman Gray stated that he was looking for information on what activities are advantageous to the town of Milton be it residential or economic development, conservation, etc. Based on the 2005 study, he knows what the answer to that question is, but does not know what the answer would be for 2015 as things have changed.

Larry Brown stated that there are many factors (such as stagnant wages that are not accounted for in such a study) that figure into this issue and that it is complicated.

C. Copeland stated that one of the most advantageous things communities can do is to increase the value of existing properties. Many of the homes in Milton are old and she sees a need to look at long-term maintenance issues. While, as L. Brown stated, wages have stagnated, things such as increased energy costs for residents among many other things, make this analysis difficult and complex and there is no easy/quick answer. What was complicated 15 years ago has gotten even more complicated.

Chairman Gray stated that if the population of Milton increases, he is concerned that this will increase the tax burden due to the cost to support that population with community services. For example, according to FBI standards (confirmed by Chief Krauss) there should be two police officers/1,000 residents as a rule of thumb. If the population of Milton increases by 1,000 people, then the town should add two officers and there is a cost associated with this service. He is trying to assess how this type of change will affect Milton and the cost of community services. He stated that the 2005 study provided a good overview, a snapshot in time, of such things.

C. Copeland will try to find more specifics for the BOS to try to answer these questions.

G. Coogan stated that the dynamics of population have changed significantly in the past 10 years. NH is an aging (people) state. There are less people moving into the state and more people moving out of the state. We are not seeing the growth in the state as we did in the 80's and 90's. The population projections are for very slow growth in the next 10-25 years in Milton.

Eric Knapp felt that growth of the town should not be planned around an increased number of residents. This is a very complex issue. High value properties will increase the tax base more than services will.

Public Hearing - Petition Warrant Article Regarding Determination of Default Budget

Chairman Gray opened the public hearing at 6:56pm in accordance with RSA 40:14-b and 40:14, IV.

The purpose of the hearing this evening is to receive public input on a petitioned warrant article which asks the voters to adopt the provisions of RSA40:14-b to delegate the determination of the default budget to the municipal budget committee. A copy of the petitioned warrant article is available at the Town Hall.

Larry Brown stated that he is the longest serving budget committee member including terms as past Chair and Vice Chair and he feels that the amount of leverage that the BOS and the Budget Committee have to exercise on the monies to be spent is small. The work on the budget by the Dept. Heads and the BOS over the course of the year is superior to the once/month review. The BOS and the Budget Committee should have more data available to do this work. The one change he would make is to have the default budget put together with the participation of the Budget Committee.

Chairman Gray stated that he agrees that more information sharing would be helpful. However, the default budget is prepared by the Town Administrator. She brings it to the BOS for approval and this is all done during business hours. There are Budget Committee members that could not be present during business hours to work on the default budget.

Hearing no other input or questions from the public, Chairman Gray closed the public hearing at 7:01pm.

Cynthia Copeland Discussion Continued Re: Dues - The transportation project solicitation is currently being conducted. This is done every 2 years in the winter (of odd years). The transportation projects go into the 10-year plan. At the same time, they establish their budget and scope of work for a 2-year cycle. Since the recession, the NH DOT has allowed 80% federal funds and 20% local match. For 9 years she has been able to use toll credits to provide services for towns. NH DOT has ceased this and she is no longer able to use this credit. This puts them in a bind and she has to make up for that loss. As a result, she is letting the Town of Milton (and other communities) know that based on the town population and the per capita numbers, that just over \$1,500.00 would be going for match (29% of dues goes toward transportation planning). She is requesting that Milton pay that portion. There are 6 of 18 communities in the Strafford region that do not pay dues; \$31,000 would come from the dues paying communities and \$17,000.00 would come from the non-dues paying communities. The \$1,500.00 is not mandated, only requested. C. Copeland will work with E. Dionne to get types of housing, ages, and other similar helpful statistics in Milton for the BOS.

Chairman Gray stated that payment of dues was not approved this year.

John Katwick feels that scenic byways should be a number one priority.

Michelle Beauchamp Town Clerk/Tax Collector Re: General Fund Account

M. Beauchamp presented a letter dated February 5th, 2015 to the BOS. On January 2nd, 2015, a bank account had been frozen due to a family passing. In turn fees had been assessed due to returned checks. On February 5th, the bank submitted a check to cover the interest and penalties. The bank miscalculated the interest and penalties and overpaid by \$64.26 (twice the amount they should have). Documentation was submitted with the letter and provided to the BOS.

M. Beaulieu moved to approve a check request in the amount of \$64.24 to pay back Profile Bank. A. Rawson seconded. Motion carried. M. Beaulieu moved to have Chairman Gray sign the check request. A. Rawson seconded. Motion carried.

On February 11th, 2015, there were two deposits of scanned checks that went into the general fund. There should have been only one in the amount of \$79,400.17. The second deposit in the amount of \$5,300.72 should have gone into the E-Reg account. M. Beauchamp provided a letter with attached documentation to the BOS. M. Beaulieu made a motion to move \$5,300.72 from the general fund to the E- Reg account. A. Rawson seconded. Motion carried.

Recreation Commission Re: Proposal for Moving Fence – There was no one present to speak to the proposal. E. Dionne will put this on the next BOS meeting agenda.

Re: Town Forest Committee – Chairman Gray stated that the terms of the Committee are staggered so that the terms would not all expire at the same time.

Colleen and Richard Bessette – Term Expires March 31st, 2017

Karen Golab and Craig Lancey – Term Expires March 31st, 2018

Member to be sworn in - Term Expires March 31st, 2016

Approval of Minutes

January 13, 2015 – Meeting Minutes – M. Beaulieu moved to approve the minutes as written. A. Rawson seconded. Motion carried.

January 21, 2015 – Regular Meeting – M. Beaulieu moved to approve the minutes as written. A. Rawson seconded. Motion carried.

January 21, 2015 – Nonpublic Meeting Minutes – M. Beaulieu moved to approve the minutes as written and to seal them for one year. A. Rawson seconded. Motion carried.

January 23, 2015 – Nonpublic Meeting Minutes - M. Beaulieu moved to approve the minutes as written and to seal them for one year. A. Rawson seconded. Motion carried.

February 3, 2015 – Regular Meeting Minutes – M. Beaulieu moved to approve the minutes as written. A. Rawson seconded. Motion carried.

February 3, 2015 – Nonpublic Meeting Minutes – M. Beaulieu moved to approve the minutes as written and to seal them for one year. A Rawson seconded. Motion carried.

Expenditure Reports

The books are technically closed for 2014 but they have not been reconciled. However, the BOS has what has been spent for each line. The Bookkeeper is not accepting any new bills, but is accepting anything encumbered. The vote for the 2015 budget will happen in March.

Administrator Comments

E. Dionne Re: The Rochester Resident Concerned About Littering: The BOS has a memo from E. Dionne regarding this issue. The Rochester resident had requested that the Milton BOS install a “No Littering” sign on the Milton end of Old Wakefield Road (state road) due to the amount of littering. E. Dionne spoke with Walter Coinhoff of the NH DOT. He informed her that towns are not allowed to install signs on state roads. Furthermore, the State stopped installing the “No Littering” signs long ago due to the fact that they were finding more trash at the bottom of the signs wherever they were installed. He said that the State only installs official traffic signs on state roads now. The State recommends that residents asking for “No Littering” signs be referred to the “Sponsor a Highway” program and that this program works well. He also recommends that municipalities recommend this program to the schools for sponsorship. He did mention that as long as the sign is not attached to or blocking any state signage or right of way, the town could install a sign, but it would carry no jurisdiction. E. Dionne will communicate with the Rochester resident regarding the information provided by the state.

Collin Lince of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission is requesting a meeting with the BOS for prioritizing projects for the NH DOT 10-year plan. He is requesting about an hour for the meeting. Chairman Gray requested waiting until after the elections. E. Dionne will inform C. Lance of this decision.

Selectman Comments

A. Rawson – Would like to thank Pat Smith and his crew as well as Chief Krauss and Chief Marique for doing so well during the past few weeks of snow. He also thanked John Katwick for his article on the CIP (written by John Nolan) in The Rochester Times.

He recently brought trash to the recycling center. When he went in to get his sticker, there was a resident in the office giving the staff a hard time about the price of stickers. The resident felt that he should not have to purchase two stickers for the same household (one for his car and one for his wife’s car).

Chairman Gray stated that stickers are required for each vehicle. If residents prefer not to buy multiple stickers, they can use only one car for the transfer station.

J. Long stated that she thought the price of the sticker was very cheap given services received in return.

Larry Brown asked about the sale of a vehicle and whether an individual must purchase a new sticker if they buy a car before the end of the year.

There was discussion around this issue and it was decided that it should remain one sticker/vehicle and if someone purchases a new car anytime during the year, they must purchase a new sticker for the new car.

M. Beaulieu – He will not be able to attend the next Budget Committee meeting. A. Rawson will attend the meeting in his place.

Regarding the grant application policy; any grant has to be approved by the Chair of the BOS before going to the state. Since the town is not a 501(c) 3 a grant application fee of \$25.00 must be paid.

M. Beaulieu presented a drawing and document developed by John Katwick representing library income and expenditures. He stated that J. Katwick did an excellent job.

J. Katwick stated that there have been some updates since he put the document together and that there is an update at the Town Hall on display at the counter (it is not finalized yet).

Chairman Gray asked the BOS if they would like to write a letter to the editor in support of the money Warrant Articles the BOS supports as well as the CIP. The Articles that the BOS does not support would not be included. This letter can also be added to the town website as well as the Fire and Police Dept. and Public Works websites. E. Dionne will compose a letter.

Public Comments

Bob Carrier felt that default budgets are not helpful to the town and that it is best to leave them to the BOS. He stated that the purpose of the Budget Committee is to put together a proper budget. If the job has been done correctly, the voters will accept it.

Chairman Gray felt that B. Carrier stated this well. The BOS, however, doesn't have the time to put it all together. The Town Administrator (with input from the Dept. heads) does that.

N. Marique stated that the Dept. was slated to replace extrication tools in the future but with the incident that happened recently, their current extrication equipment could not do the job (due to different metals in newer cars). There is money in the CIP with which they can purchase updated equipment. The City of Rochester stepped in and was able to extricate drivers from their vehicles when the Milton cutter couldn't do the job. The BOS felt this was an appropriate use of CIP money.

John Katwick stated that when he was visiting with Pat Smith of the Highway Dept. recently, he informed him that during the most recent storm drivers of the dump trucks were operating (2 of the trucks) with cracked rims. He emphasized that they will not be useful for much longer.

L. Brown – Les Brown asked that Larry Brown inform the BOS that the Library is applying for a Moose Plate grant. With the grant, the windows would be painted, caulked, glazed and filled. The motion to approve at this time would be premature.

J. Katwick is also working on a Moose Plate grant for the Townhouse. Only one grant/town is allowed.

Chairman Gray closed public comments at 7:52pm and motioned to back into nonpublic session under RSA 91A 3: II (a). M. Beaulieu seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Toni McLellan
Recording Clerk

Chairman Tom F. Gray

James Michael Beaulieu

Andrew Rawson