

ATTENDING: Ruth Adams, Bob Axelsen, Emil Braley, Franz Jongerden, Calvin Lewis, Bonnie Lord Laughlin, Tammy Ramsdell, Chairperson.

ABSENT: Teri Anderson, Pete Childs, Doug Hubbard

A quorum was present.

Attending from the Town: Selectmen Ray Cullen, Darryl Hubbard, Bruce Rozett and Selectmen's Assistant /Bookkeeper Roxanne Herrick

Tammy convened the meeting at 7:05PM and invited all present to salute the flag. Darryl requested an amendment to the March 11 meeting minutes about the proposed maintenance building. Emil moved to accept, Bob seconded, and all voted to accept the March 11 meeting minutes as amended (in italics): Darryl referred to the fact that the transfer of funds for the building failed in referendum on Feb. 28, 2014. He said the area will still be graded.

Old Business

New Snow Plow Truck

Darryl said that the town of Westbrook called today and we should have the truck in a few days. We still owe \$28,000 which Darryl said will be paid on receipt of the truck.

Compactor at the Transfer Station

Darryl said the engineering work has been done and we should get a lot of bids on it because there isn't a lot of work out there. Bonnie voiced concerns about whether people would choose to drive down the steep Pine Hill Road to bring their recyclables to the transfer station there when the road conditions are bad and when the transfer station is open only one day a week for some months as it is now. She noted that even with 24/7 access to the silver bullets now that people don't recycle enough. Discussion. Bob said the compactor will need to be monitored so the wrong trash won't be put in there and that the station will have to be open at least 3 days a week. Darryl said he doesn't see any negatives about the project because cardboard can be placed there without having to be cut up like it is now at the silver bullets. The compactor will cost about \$25,000 and the whole project with excavating and concrete work, etc. will be about \$60,000. The selectmen have called contractors asking them to bid; among them, George Morrison, Steve Estes, and Northeast. Tammy asked for copies of the engineering work to be available to the committee at next month's meeting. Darryl said there were no bids on the project last fall when it was first put out because it was such a small project. Darryl endorsed that this will decrease the curbside costs and increase the recycling savings. Tammy asked what percentage Limington recycles. A figure around 12% a year was offered. (The figure is actually 4.64% for the past 12 months, according to the ecomaine website.)

New Equipment Expenditures--general information

Tammy directed attention to 2013 budget p. 21. She said a line item for new equipment became a part of the Snow and Ice budget in 2014. Discussion ensued about how the \$28,000 balance for the new snow plow truck will be paid. Bruce said that we paid the \$30,000 for the truck (in December 2013) out of Snow and Ice funds for 2013. Bruce said the balance of \$28,000 could be taken out of the Snow and Ice reserve account or could be taken out of the \$20,000 in the new equipment line for 2014 (in addition to \$8000 from Snow and Ice reserve). Tammy said she thought that money had to be voted on by the public if it came out of the reserve accounts. Bruce said that would be true only if the money was going to be used for something other than what the reserve account was set up for. For instance, when we built the salt shed we had to have a special town meeting to use money from the transfer station reserve account; if we had used only money from the salt shed reserve account we wouldn't have needed a special town meeting for approval. Therefore the remainder that is now in the Snow and Ice reserve account, about \$80,000, could be spent without a vote of the public, as long as it was spent on snow and ice.

Saco River Cable TV

Bonnie asked to clarify when we pay our annual assessment (\$9800 for 2014) and Roxanne said since SRCT's fiscal year is July to June we pay our assessment sometime during that time; we happened to pay it in the first quarter of this year as shown in the reports tonight.

New Business

Proposed Maintenance Building

Tammy gave out copies of plans for the building to each committee member. She said she made these copies so we would have as much information as possible on what the building will look like and all of the work that is involved in it. Darryl said he thought this was a finance committee not a building committee. Tammy said that she thought that nothing had been brought up on the maintenance building before this so this was appropriate information for people to see. She noted that Darryl had said previously that the building wouldn't cost more than \$150,000 and since the plans show that with everything that will be in this building, such as radiant heat, a septic system, and a well, getting the information to a finance committee for advisory ideas is a good idea. She referred to the process of the salt shed and how much public input there was in the salt shed committee; that the 10 members of that committee solicited input from the public and that there were public hearings for that project. She said the public knew every step of the way about that project. Darryl said that the money that has been spent to get the proposed maintenance building project where it is today could be spent by the selectmen whether Tammy liked it or not. Tammy said what she didn't like was the public not knowing anything about it. Darryl said all that had been done was an account had been set up to fund the building. The public voted not to fund that account (in the referendum vote Feb. 28). Darryl said Tammy wants to run everything. Tammy said what she wanted to do was to bring information to the public. Darryl left the meeting. Bruce said that the first thing people ask about is the cost of a building and that getting the engineering plans was to get bids so costs could be obtained. Tammy said we are told \$150,000 for this building but when we look at the plans it looks like a lot more than \$150,000. Tammy said all she wanted to do was put this information in our hands so that we can do more in this committee than just rubber stamp everything the selectmen say. She said that the planning board has this information, shouldn't the finance committee have it, too? Bruce said it is not a purview of the finance committee to see the plans until it is known how much the building will cost. Ray said we aren't doing anything behind anyone's back. Tammy said we had no idea this was before the planning board before town meeting. Tammy said whether the people wanted the building built or not the selectmen plan to clear the site down there anyway. Tammy said she wanted to know if we are in favor of doing ground work when the public voted down moving money to do this building. Tammy asked when the permits for the site will expire. Tammy said she doesn't think the building is a bad idea but that the public should decide. Bruce said what Tammy wanted to do was talk about the color of the windows. Tammy said no, what she wanted was to know the entire cost of the building; that she thinks it will be more than \$150,000 and that the total cost of the building is what she is interested in. Bruce said public meetings will be necessary but they can't be held until we know the cost of the building. Tammy said she thinks more costs will be created because of the building, such as hiring a mechanic. Bruce said that's not certain but if a plow driver did anything on a truck today he would have to lie on the cold ground to do it.

Willard Boothby

Mr. Boothby, attending as a member of the public, was recognized. He said selectmen seem to think the public doesn't need to know about a building until it's time to vote on it. He said selectmen shouldn't be getting mad because someone else is asking a question about their plan. He said the selectmen should bring the people along in the process of hearing about a new building before the people are asked to vote. He said the people aren't supposed to ask questions or know where our money is going and that's a poor way to run a town. Even if the selectmen want a project themselves they need to involve the public and welcome public input.

Other Discussion

Ray said he resented Willard's comments and all the rest of the nonsense so that he was going home. Tammy asked him what are we supposed to talk about at the Financial Advisory Committee. Bruce said that is documented in the Finance Advisory Committee By Laws. Tammy read from her copy of the By Laws: we are to review and make recommendations on the annual operating budget, we are to review and make recommendations on capital expenditures, to review and make recommendations on supplemental appropriations and expenditures and other budgetary action whenever proposed by the municipal officers. Isn't that what we are doing? Bruce said no because once the selectmen get costs on the building they will bring them to the committee for input on how it should be funded. Tammy asked about plans and costs for the compactor. Bruce said if you want to find out about the compactor, come in and look at the plans. The documents have been in the Municipal Office for at least 6 months. Tammy said so it's up to us to go in and try to find the information, to ask Roxanne, etc.; that no one brings the information to us, that we have to go get it. Bruce said yes. Tammy said that's what she has done by making these copies and it's turned into a big thing tonight. Bruce and Ray both said their impression was that Tammy wanted input. Tammy said no, what she wanted was access to the information for the public. Ray said he didn't want people doing name calling and he wasn't paid for that kind of nonsense so he was leaving. He left.

Calvin asked for clarifications about spending the money. Tammy said that at our last meeting Darryl said they had the permits and wanted to get the ground work started. Tammy said the people voted not to move the money for the maintenance garage for now. Bruce said they could use money from the Snow and Ice Reserve account to do this work if they wanted to. Calvin said the ground work will have to be done sometime. Tammy asked whether we are in favor of going forward to cut trees before the townspeople have voted yes on the building. Calvin said no, he didn't think we should. Emil said that the vote against the transfer of funds--for whatever reasons people voted against the transfer--meant that cutting the trees down wouldn't be the right thing to do now since the public didn't vote for moving the money to fund the project. However, he said, the selectmen are within their power to do it. He said he thought the permits did have an expiration time. Bruce said they would lapse after 2 years. The fees for the permits, which Bruce said include the storm water permit which is hard to get, were \$2300. Calvin asked what is the time frame to get the costs and Bruce said they could go out to bid tomorrow. Discussion that they could clear the site with money from the Snow and Ice account, but after that, with other things about to be paid from Snow and Ice, like the \$28,000 for the new plow truck, that there will be nothing left in the Snow and Ice account. Clarification from Roxanne that block grant money is a separate account and has to be spent on roads. Bonnie said she wasn't in favor of the site being cleared when the project has not been voted on by the voters. Bruce said that until we have bids we won't know how much the building will cost.

Bonnie asked if the project had indeed been taken to the planning board because she thought that at last month's meeting it was said that it hadn't been brought to the planning board. Bruce clarified that this project has not been taken to the planning board yet. It was on the planning board agenda but it has been taken off. Tammy asked if the planning board has the building plans and Bruce said he didn't know. Emil asked Bruce if the intention all along had been to pay for the building out of Snow and Ice Reserve. Bruce said no one would expect the Town would have cash to pay for the building; that it would take a vote of the taxpayers to move money from another account or to borrow money to pay for the building. Discussion of reserve accounts. Bruce said that selectmen can spend money from a reserve account for activities specific to that account without a vote of the taxpayers, but they cannot spend for activities not to do with the account. Bruce said a few years ago there was a proposal to establish a single reserve account but that tax payers voted this down. Emil said he agreed with the idea of a single

reserve account and that also as a Finance Committee we should be asking departments to create 5 year plans. Bonnie said discussion would be a good idea because historically people have had reasons not to merge all the reserve accounts and therefore there might be good reasons not to create a single account. Bruce said that it was OK to spend \$2300 from the Snow and Ice reserve account for permits for the proposed maintenance building even though the town voted against the transfer of \$75,000. Bruce said a single capital reserves account would list the town's needs out 5 years and the townspeople could vote to use the money in a different manner if they wanted. But having a reserve account for let's say a new rescue or a new roof on the municipal building helps with budgeting. Without such a reserve account, the town will have to vote each time for each new expenditure. Emil said the dedicated amounts could be changed each year. Bob said in the past people didn't understand the proposal to make an account for capital improvements. Bruce disagreed and said the problem was Howard Allen and other people were concerned that amounts dedicated to their departments could be used up for expenditures for other departments. Bonnie said she appreciated that Tammy made copies of plans for the proposed maintenance building for the committee tonight because this has to do with spending public money. Emil said he thought that what the selectmen have been saying is they aren't ready for the finance committee's input into the building yet. Bruce said this was correct. Emil said he, too, appreciated having the copies and that cost is important but he was in favor of the building. Bruce said the time to talk about some things, such as paving, is at the Thursday selectmen meetings, not at the finance committee meetings. He said discussion about what road would be paved isn't the province of the finance committee. Tammy said it's good to hear input from townspeople any time there is an opportunity is to hear from the public. Bruce said if you want to have the ear of the selectmen stick to when the right time is to talk about a certain issue and that would be the Thursday selectmen meeting, not the finance committee meeting. Tammy reiterated that all she wanted to do was bring forth information about the proposed building so this committee could learn about it. She said she was sorry that doing so caused a ruckus but that she didn't think that having the information available was a bad thing. Calvin said having the information was good but that the difference was there was a committee with the salt shed building, for example, and concerns were brought to that committee. Calvin said he thought people needed to know how much the building would cost and it was unlikely the building would cost as much as the salt shed. He said he didn't think it could be built for \$150,000. Bonnie said there are parts to it that may create ongoing costs, such as radiant heat, that should also be part of what is understood to be the cost of the building.

ADJOURNMENT: Ruth moved, Emil seconded to adjourn at 8:39 PM. Vote 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Bonnie Lord Laughlin, Secretary