

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

OCTOBER 14, 2013

MEMORIAL BUILDING

7:00 P.M.

The following are to be considered draft minutes until approved by the Board at their next meeting.

Selectmen present: Don Hill, Chairman; Leigh Callaway and George McCusker.

Others present: Tom Duling, Tim Julian, Bryan O'Day, Justin Hastings, and Todd Fleury, Springfield School Board Representative.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Sutton Selectmen Wally Baker, Chairman; Ricia McMahon and Sutton Police Chief, John Corbett. Sutton Board of Selectmen attended to ask support for funding for a school resource officer in the operating budget for the school district particularly for the middle and high school. If the towns give support, then it would be put on the school budget, where it would be shared equally. At times, this person would also visit elementary schools. This person would basically act as a deterrent for drugs, alcohol, bullying and cyber bullying. The time has come to have an official in school for acts that are detrimental to the students. This is an increasing burden for the Town of Sutton,

Don Hill stated he thinks we all agree that children deserve a safe and calm learning environment in the schools. The voter's have resoundingly said "no" when the issue has been on the school ballot to hire an additional Sutton Police officer who would be the school resource officer. This first came up after the new Middle School was welcomed into the Town of Sutton. Springfield residents were opposed to that move and the next thing they were then being asked to support an increase in Sutton Police staff. This has been a "tough sell" to Springfield residents.

Don stated he felt the School Board is responsible for funding for staffing and this is an item that needs to be part of the school board budget. Sutton Selectman Baker stated Dan Wolfe has recommended that Sutton get support of the other towns in the district before the school board considers whether to budget for the expenditure. Bradford, Newbury and Warner have sent letters of support. Sutton Selectmen have meetings scheduled with Wilmot and New London. This is not giving money to Sutton to support an increase in Sutton Police staff. The school board has felt that in good conscience, they have gone to the voters several times seeking approval, and the issue has failed. They do not want this to be a non-transparent action, which is why they are seeking support from the individual towns.

Todd Fleury, Springfield School Rep stated that there is some divide among the school board members who feel this failed on the warrant many times, and "no means no". Todd stated that he was here this evening to get a sense of how the leaders of Springfield feel. He has spoken to Newport who recently put this in place, and they stated that they have seen a difference in the schools there.

Chief Corbett stated that he sees this as being present with a positive approach instead of having to be there when there on a negative approach. The school board will hire for the position working in conjunction with the Sutton Police Department. The resource officer would have to be a sworn police officer in the municipality due to "COPS laws" governing jurisdiction. Superintendant Frew also believes in the concept and he and Chief Corbett are actively working on the job description, budget, and contract for whoever is hired.

The Selectmen asked Chief Julian for his thoughts on the matter. Tim stated no other town in the district has these issues to face because we do not have high schools or jr. high schools in our towns. The Sutton PD spends a large amount of time in the schools.

Further discussion, George McCusker questioned if it had ever been discussed having other towns send police officers in to cover the school. Chief Corbett stated it was tried as "primetime" before, but there are issues that different agencies handle matters differently. This position involves someone with training as a law enforcement officer with law related counseling, and law related teaching. George stated in the past there used to be a "monitor" in schools. He thinks voters may be thinking of what was done in the past with the monitor, or that there is now going to be "armed guards" in the schools. Leigh stated he has been and is still in favor of this position. He likes the idea that the funding will be from the school district general fund and not as a warrant article. Don stated the idea now is to get endorsement by the district selectboards. The matter is being handled above board and in public and seems that it is being supported by the selectboards.

Appreciation was extended to the Sutton Board members and Chief Corbett for their presentation.

Project List:

Leigh touched on the areas that have been completed since the last project list review. The list is getting smaller because of the work being done by Pete Abair and his crew and the work that Bill Huntoon has finished.

Personnel Manual:

Leigh stated that the Board had gotten through the first 10 pages, but he has gone back and made the employee definitions consistent throughout. None of the language in the policy itself has changed. The "earned time" calculations are consistent with the changes made by MRI. Changes are consistent for 52 week workers and not intended to take away any benefits for current employees considered to be "grandfathered". Don moved to reflect that as changes are made if it puts someone in a new category that reduces current benefits, those employees would be grandfathered and this should be documented and put in their personnel file. The motion was seconded by Leigh and unanimously approved. Holidays are largely handled per department. The office is closed on Fridays, the highway department works M-F, the Police schedule is 7 days a week. The Town Clerk/Tax Collector makes decisions on how to post holiday hours for the office.

Leigh shared the language he drafted regarding drug and alcohol policy coverage. Procedures and testing details need to be worked on further.

Sale of Piano: Dennis Haas has indicated the piano is saleable. The Selectmen, short of finding someone willing to donate tuning services, had recommended the piano be sold and an electronic keyboard be purchased. There was no information found as to the history of the piano or how it had come to be in the town hall. Don moved to advertise the sale of the piano through sealed bids, with a minimum bid of \$350.00, to be moved at the purchaser's expense. Motion seconded by Leigh and unanimously approved.

Don noted there is an Emergency Preparedness meeting on Wednesday, October 16, 2013 @ 7:00 p.m. for a tabletop mock disaster drill.

Minutes of September 23 and September 26 2013: George McCusker moved to accept, seconded by Leigh Callaway and unanimously approved.

Board and Department Updates: Don reported 2 properties were recently taken by tax deed. One other has been postponed due to a lack of success at getting the mail delivered to the property owner. Due diligence needs to be undertaken to try to get in touch with the owner. Pixie was able to get in touch with the owner of three lots in Eastman. The notice was returned unclaimed. The owner said “take them.”

Don explained that the Lee Trailer and Land on Old Croydon Road has been deeded and will be merged. Motion by Don to approve the Declaration of Merger, seconded by Leigh and unanimously approved.

Leigh reported the Conservation Commission has visited the 5 town-owned acres down near I 89I. The area is mixed hardwoods, but is steep and there isn't a very good place for a log landing.

Leigh reported there were 7 stones recently straightened in the Cemetery.

George stated he and Leigh attended a meeting in New London put on by the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region Planning Commission regarding regional planning.

George reported Wednesday, October 9th several ZBA and Planning members attended a law lecture in Grantham about conflicts of interest and ethical considerations for land use boards.

Tom Duling stated he has spoken to Mike Howard about the drainage around the “snack bar” property on Route 114. He is assured the drainage will filter through 6' of sand. Tom will keep watch next summer and during heavy rains.

Pete Abair reported Pike has started paving on Stoney Brook Road today and will be paving Town Farm and George Hill Road on Wednesday.

Don reported that the Selectmen are looking into issues relative to town liabilities and expenses regarding tax deeding property on Shad Hill Road. They will be following up with DES issues on property on Shore Drive.

New Business:

Town Hall Cleaning: There have been several activities scheduled at the Town Hall for the past couple of weeks. Don reported that the Selectmen had met with a cleaning company as to how to set up a schedule of routine cleaning for various town buildings. The Selectmen need to come up with a schedule and a scope of work and then make a decision as to how to proceed.

Correspondence:

Don noted the letter that Leigh wrote to local legislators regarding the “laws of unintended consequences”. The state was delaying setting tax rates because the legislature has set a new regulation for the information schools are required to furnish necessary for the tax rate. This has delayed the DRA from setting tax rates, and will have a ripple effect on the town's in getting tax bills out in a timely fashion. The Town will send the tax bills out in November as soon as possible after getting a tax rate set by the State.

Notice from Steve Klein. An anonymous benefactor has an interest in gifting stock to the library. The stock would then be sold and the proceeds invested. Investment firms are looking for proof of tax-exempt status from the town. Steve is looking for a letter of support from the Selectmen. Don felt if the letter came from the town attorney, on legal masthead, perhaps an investment firm would respond better. This is a sizeable donation to the library. Don suggested asking town counsel to draft a quick "in your face" legal snapshot on behalf of the town regarding tax-exempt status. Motion made by Leigh to authorize the expenditure of legal fees for the purpose of this letter, seconded by George and unanimously approved.

Don asked Leigh and George for their thoughts on the presentation by the Sutton Selectmen. Four towns have given their letters of support for the resource officer. Leigh stated he endorses the Kearsarge District's hiring of a resource officer. If they chose to do so through the Sutton Police Department and that is the best approach, he is in favor of supporting the request and always has been in support of the resource officer. George stated at the Joint Selectboard meeting he asked the question about how this person would be hired and he was told it would be hired by an agency. Now they are back to the school board writing a check to the Town of Sutton for a Police Officer. He is not in favor of that. Don stated that with sentiments from the school board, the municipal budget committee, the Sutton Selectmen, and the Sutton Police Chief he feels the Selectmen should draft a letter, not in terms of paying for Sutton's Police force to grow, but endorsing the school board's right to hire a Resource Officer for the schools. Todd stated it has to be a Sutton Police Officer to be able to be presented and covered under "COPS laws". Motion made by Leigh to recommend the Selectmen write a letter to the school board to recommend the Kearsarge Regional School Board support the position of a School Resource Officer, and the Town of Springfield feels strongly this is not being done to augment the Town of Sutton's payroll. The motion was seconded by Don. Motion approved by a vote of 2 in favor, 1 (George) opposed. Don will write the letter.

Signatures:

Tax Collectors abatement for Camp Coniston for exempt taxes from Charitable exemption.

Building Permit – Sunny Side Drive – Eastman -