

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

REGULAR MEETING

January 4, 2010

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Barton, Chairman
Douglas Ficken

John Neal
Brett Sanderson

Bruce Schmidt

STAFF PRESENT:

Frank Heald

OTHERS PRESENT:

Marilyn Ledoux
Howie Pall

Ted Reeves

Michelle Stinson (LPC-TV)

1. **Call to Order**

A. Chairman Howard Barton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All members present.

2. **Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings**

A. Howard Barton advised that the minutes to be approved are from the regular meeting of December 7, 2009.

B. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Doug Ficken to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of December 7, 2009 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

3. **Comments from Citizens**

A. There were none.

4. **Liquor Control Board**

A. Frank Heald advised that the request is from Okemo Mountain Food and Beverage for an evening party on January 9, 2010. This item is for their information only and is approved by the town clerk. No action is needed by this board

5. **Receive and Act on Errors and Omissions Report from the Ludlow Board of Listers**

A. Howard Barton noted that there are two properties listed.

B. Bruce Schmidt advised that, for the record, one of the properties is owned by his brother and sister-in-law.

C. **MOTION by John Neal and seconded by Brett Sanderson to accept the report as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

6. **Ludlow Armory Update**

- A. Frank Heald advised that the Phase II Environmental Study has been completed and there were only issues. On the inside there is lead dust (residual from the shooting range.) This can be mitigated by thorough cleaning and sealing by painting. The people who did the asbestos clean up at town hall (who do not do lead clean-up) said that it was their opinion that washing before painting would suffice. This item may either be discussed with the Department of Health of ANR. On the outside of the building there is also some minimal lead residue and about 5 yards of material must be removed. There is a full copy of the report in his office if anyone would like to read it. The town now owns the building and has secured it.
- B. Howard Barton asked if they retest after the building has been cleaned.
- C. Frank Heald said they would swab it. Dust on the floor was the major issue. He added that he thinks they will get funds from the Brownfield grant and South Windsor Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) to pay for most of the clean up. He has applied for an umbrella policy from an agency of the ANR. It is called a BRELLA policy and will cover anything that was not identified in the Phase II study. SWRPC has paid for the \$500 application fee and he thinks they may also pay the \$5,000 policy fee. He said that at the last meeting, the Armory committee discussed an aggressive time line for moving forward. The town will have a DRB on Monday, January 11, 2010 and will hold a public informational meeting in mid to late January. The committee talked about getting out an RFP by late January or early February to be returned just after town meeting. If the bond is approved, the bids would be opened and if it is not approved, the bids would be returned unopened. Concerns had been voiced about asking contractors to do all of the work to prepare proposals before the town approves the bond. However, if the bond is approved, only one bidder would be awarded the project and the others still would have done the work. The intent is to get a jump on spring construction projects and probably get better pricing. The committee is preparing a brochure for distribution to voters.
- D. John Neal said that he would still like to know what effect the armory would have on the budget. The board needs to look at the numbers.
- E. Howard Barton asked if the building is being heated.
- F. Frank Heald said it is. The building is checked daily. They have asked Countryside alarms to hook up the alarm to the dialer and the building is being insured. We are going to have someone check on the boilers.
- G. Bruce Schmidt asked where the group effort with the schools comes in. He has not seen anything definite from the schools, although there does seem to be a consensus from them. This needs to be a community project with concerted efforts.
- H. John Neal said that the schools have to buy in to do this project. He thinks that they have good school support. We (the armory committee) did presentations for LES, BRHS and RWSU and it was well received. He said that we still need to look at the numbers. He added that there are two good prospective tenants for the tank barn, Black River Good Neighbors and LPCTV.
- I. Frank Heald said that he met with the superintendent of schools this morning and they are waiting for information from the food service people and Howie Pall.
- J. Howard Barton said that he is still concerned that we still don't know exactly what we are going to do and how much it will cost. We discuss a \$1,200,000 bond, but what if the project runs over and we have to go back to the voters for more funding. It will be hard to get them to approve more money.
- K. Frank Heald said that he is confident with the estimates and thinks there is enough room in the \$1,200,000.
- L. John Neal said that there were 2 public information meetings to share input and comments on the building use and (referring to a drawing of the plans for the building) this is a fairly definite layout for the building. He added that he is still concerned on whether they should try and raise some money before they go to the voters.

- M. Bruce Schmidt said the committee did a good job. He added that when they go to the voters, he would like members of all of the school boards present. We need commitment from them. He asked if the tank barn could be renovated first. This way, there would be income from the tenants. From what he has read in the school boards' minutes, there does not seem to be anything definite at this time.
- N. Doug Ficken said that the school board has not voted yet, but the general consensus is positive. They were waiting for the town to actually take possession of the buildings. LES is meeting this Wednesday and may vote on it then, if not then next month. They are looking for information on kitchen equipment.
- O. Frank Heald said we also need a parking and circulation plan for getting the children to and from the armory building from school. The school has some preliminary information on this and the town will look at it.
- P. Bruce Schmidt said that the voters will not want to have to vote on a second bond if the \$1,200,000 is not enough. We need to do this right the first time. If the boards were all together, it would show more confidence on our part and the voters would feel more comfortable.
- Q. Frank Heald said that come September 1st, the students will have to be eating at one place or the other.
- R. Brett Sanderson asked if they have looked at other options for funding.
- S. John Neal said the committee could not do anything until the town closed on the building. Now we can look for funding and grants. His goal is to offset as much money as possible.
- T. Frank Heald said if the voters approve the bond, we actually do not access the money until July and have until then to find more funding.
- U. Brett Sanderson said it would look better to the voters if we had more information on grants before town meeting.

7. **Report of VLCT Leader Program**

- A. Frank Heald advised that the check from VLCT for the Wellness and Safety Program participation was just under \$8,000. In the past, this money was partially shared with the employees and he would like to do this again this year. The 1st year, we gave them vests, the 2nd we gave jackets and last year we gave gift cards.
- B. Howard Barton asked what Frank Heald's recommendation for this year would be.
- C. Frank Heald said last year it amounted to \$3,400 out of the \$10,000 received.
- D. Bruce Schmidt asked why the check was less this year.
- E. Frank Heald said the program changed. He is extremely happy with the participation. He suggests \$3,000 to \$3,400.
- F. Howard Barton recalled that last year the board discussed percentages and asked how many employees there are.
- G. Frank Heald said 34 people who are eligible.
- H. Bruce Schmidt said we should continue to share with them.
- I. Doug Ficken suggested that the board approve a dollar number and authorize Frank Heald to use it as he sees fit.
- J. Bruce Schmidt asked Frank Heald if he would be comfortable with \$3,000.
- K. Frank Heald said yes.
- L. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Doug Ficken to authorize Frank Heald to spend up to \$3,000 for gifts for eligible employees who participated in the Wellness and Safety program. Motion passed.**

8. **Financial Statements**

- A. Frank Heald advised that copies of the statements and management letter are in the packets. There is one material weakness and his response to it. The office is cleaning up its accounting systems. There were three recommendations dealing with conflict of interest, fraud and ambulance collections. These have been discussed in the past. Frank Heald said that, with regard to ambulance collections, some people feel that the ambulance should be free and do not pay their bills.
- B. Bruce Schmidt asked why they are still there.
- C. John Neal said that they are only recommendations and the board does not have to accept them.

9. **FY 2011 Budget Workshop**

- A. Frank Heald advised that after their last meeting, he went back and made some very careful changes. These are documented in his memo. He noted that the \$6,000 for the After School program will not be there. The appropriation of \$19,000 for the after school program will be \$18,292. There is a letter from Black River Good Neighbors (BRGN) requesting an increase in their appropriation from \$2,000 to \$3,000.
- B. Appropriations and Voted Articles
 - i. Bruce Schmidt asked why New Start Bus Project is still listed under Articles to be voted on. He recalls that the board decided to move an item approved one year as an article to appropriations the following year. He also feels that the BRGN increase request be put in the articles group.
 - ii. Howard Barton said that New Start is not Ludlow based and should be voted on.
 - iii. Frank Heald said that New Start is part of the CRT/Current/Marble Valley bus system from Bellows Falls to Rutland and has very good ridership.
 - iv. Bruce Schmidt said CRT should go to appropriations.
 - v. John Neal said that CRT and New Start should go to appropriations.
 - vi. Howard Barton asked if all letters for appropriations have been received.
 - vii. Frank Heald said letters have been received for all except New Beginnings, Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT/NH, Springfield Area Hospice (Visiting Nurse), and VT Adult Learning. If these are not received by the next meeting on January 18th, they will be taken off the list.
 - viii. Bruce Schmidt said that BRGN should be moved to an article if they are asking for more money and New Start and CRT should be moved to appropriations.
 - ix. Howard Barton said that people don't want to vote on a long list of articles, but groups asking for money should answer questions.
 - x. Bruce Schmidt asked what Educational Operations is.
 - xi. Frank Heald said crossing guards and other things like that.
 - xii. John Neal said that if a group wants to increase the amount it receives, it should be moved back to articles.
 - xiii. Bruce Schmidt said what if the board decides to cut appropriations? Maybe the board should work on the appropriations earlier next year.
 - xiv. Doug Ficken said that applicants would be required to get their request letters in earlier.
 - xv. John Neal said to leave the appropriations alone this year. What about New Start and CRT.
 - xvi. Bruce Schmidt said to move them to appropriations and leave them separate. The additional \$1,000 for BRGN should go into articles. He said that he did not realize that the total amount of appropriations was as high as it is.
 - xvii. MOTION for discussion by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by John Neal to move New Start Bus and CRT, voted as articles last year, to appropriations. Motion failed, 2 for and 3 against.

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- xviii. Brett Sanderson said leave it as it is.
 - xix. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by John Neal to put the \$1,000 increase request from BRGN as a separate article to be voted on. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - xx. **MOTION by Doug Ficken and seconded by Brett Sanderson to establish October 1, 2010 as the deadline for letters of request for appropriations and a letter will be included with this year's appropriation checks advising applicants of this change. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - xxi. John Neal asked if CRT and New Start could be handled as one article.
 - xxii. Ted Reeves said that they could handle it internally.
 - xxiii. **MOTION by John Neal and seconded by Brett Sanderson to combine articles for CRT and New Start Bus into one item, to be listed as one article as CRT/New Start Bus. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - xxiv. John Neal verified that the armory renovation is not included in this budget.
 - xxv. Frank Heald said it was not because it has to be presented to voters separately. If they approve the bond, the is one budget and if they deny the bond, there is a different budget (this one.)
- C. Recreation Department
- i. Brett Sanderson asked why Telephone is increased if Kevin is moved to Buildings and Grounds.
 - ii. Frank Heald said it should read \$4,000 for Recreation less \$600 for Buildings and Grounds leaving \$3,400.
 - iii. Bruce Schmidt asked why the increase in Supplies.
 - iv. Howard Pall said that id fencing material for Dorsey and Fletcher Fields. You only get 1-2 years out of it.
 - v. Bruce Schmidt asked about the white plastic fencing.
 - vi. Howie Pall said that didn't work the way it was supposed to. The PVC poles were supposed to spring back, but the snapped instead.
 - vii. Howard Barton asked why Telephone is so high.
 - viii. Frank Heald said that includes alarm system to Dorsey and West Hill buildings.
 - ix. Bruce Schmidt asked where the savings for not running the winter ice skating at West Hill is listed.
 - x. Howie Pall said he removed the line item Winter Labor.
 - xi. Bruce Schmidt said it should have been left in. He asked about After School Recreation.
 - xii. Frank Heald said it had been included in Coaches and Instructors.
 - xiii. Howie Pall said it is 1 person, for 1 hour per day for 120 days.
 - xiv. Bruce Schmidt asked if the town does background checks on coaches.
 - xv. Howie Pall said yes, fingerprints are taken here and sent in.
 - xvi. Doug Ficken asked about Little League.
 - xvii. Howie Pall said Recreation took it over in November. Mount Holly and Ludlow have teams.
- D. Planning Commission Request
- i. Bruce Schmidt asked about the request from the Planning Commission for increase in compensation. He asked what they are receiving.
 - ii. Frank Heald said \$25 per meeting.
 - iii. Bruce Schmidt asked what the DRB members receive.
 - iv. Frank Heald said \$1200 per year.
 - v. Howard Barton said that in the past, the Planning Commission members received a flat yearly rate, but due to spotty attendance, that was changed.

- vi. Bruce Schmidt said that the Planning Commission does have a role and most of the members put in time. The DRB is responsible for permits and carrying out policy.
 - vii. Frank Heald said that the DRB activity was down this year because of the economy, but they not only have meetings, they also have separate deliberative sessions.
 - viii. Bruce Schmidt said he would like to table this item for more research. At this time, he is not in favor of a set, yearly amount. He noted that attendance is still spotty.
- E. Fire Department Management
- i. Frank Heald said that he has spoken to Chief Kolenda in the past regarding increasing compensation to chiefs and officers. The town gets excellent value from the leadership – they do a great job and put in a lot of time.
 - ii. There was general consensus of board members to approve the increase in the line item.
- F. Transfer Station Scale
- i. Frank Heald said that they must replace the scale and it would cost \$20,000. They may take \$15,000 from the Land Fill line. He said they would have to fix the bank before the next fiscal year and find the money in this year's budget.

10. **Department Head Reports**

- A. Howard Barton reported that all reports are in. There were no comments

11. **Other Business**

A. Weathersfield Proposal

- i. Frank Heald said there had been a proposal from a group in Weathersfield for an Energy Efficiency Program, where the towns would borrow money that they would lend to individuals for energy upgrades. He said that he is not in favor of Ludlow borrowing money for this.
- ii. There was general consensus among the board members.

B. River Valley Technical Center (RVTC)

- i. Frank Heald advised that there was a request from RVTC to hang a banner advising people about adult education classes and they were told they could not do it because that area was for town only.
- ii. Howard Barton said that should go to the Village Trustees because the sign is in the village and it is a village policy.

C. Veterans' Exception

- i. Frank Heald advised that he needs to get more information on the impact it would have on the town.

12. **Set Date for Next Meeting**

- A. Next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2010.

13. **Sign Warrant Orders**

- A. Warrant orders have been signed.

14. **Possible Executive Session – Real Estate and Personnel**

- A. Frank Heald said that an Executive session is needed.
- B. **MOTION by Brett Sanderson and seconded by John Neal to enter into Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously.**

- C. Board entered into Executive Session at 9:15 p.m.
- D. Board exited Executive Session at 9:45 p.m.
- E. No action taken.

15. **Adjourn**

- A. **MOTION by John Neal and seconded by Doug Ficken to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Howard Barton, Jr., Chairman

Brett Sanderson

Doug Ficken

Bruce Schmidt

John Neal