



# Office of Board of Selectmen

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Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 5, 2016, 5:00 p.m.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Ruth Mooney called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Also present were Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Ron Cormier(5:05), Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin, Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace, Kevin Sturgeon, Heritage Commission Members Linda Frawley, Brian Watterson, Sanbornton Fire Chief Paul Dexter, Sanbornton Regionalization Committee Members Dave DeVoy-Chairman, Steve Ober, Roger Grey, Steve Cobb, Evelyn Auger and Andy Sanborn, Building Inspector Steve Paquin, Fire Chief Ken Erickson, Donna Cilley, Mark Mooney, Rick Segalini, Norma & Sonny Patten, Alfred Fecteau, Barbara Binette, Joe Rhodes and several other residents and Gail Ober of The Daily Sun.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Minutes**

Selectman Pike moved the minutes of the meeting held on November 21, 2016 as written. Chairman Mooney seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

## **Abatements, Manifests, Exemptions & Credits**

Chairman Mooney moved to approve the abatements, manifests, exemptions and credits; seconded by Selectman Jon Pike, unanimously approved.

## **Sanbornton Fire Department Regionalization Committee**

David DeVoy chairman of the Sanbornton Fire Department Regionalization Committee introduced the group and explained that they have been meeting since August formulating ideas to bring to other communities regarding regionalization and sharing services. Selectman Pike advised the group that Belmont has previously attempted to do this with Sanbornton when decisions needed to be made regarding the Winnisquam Fire Department and Sanbornton was not interested at all. He noted that the proposal included Tilton and was a very fair proposal that would have only cost Sanbornton \$16,000. Additionally he is pro regionalization and is very pleased with the results of working with Laconia. He explained that he is willing to listen but wanted the group to know there is history regarding shared services, Sanbornton said no thank you and ultimately Belmont closed the station. David DeVoy noted that he has been pro regionalization for some time and has been active and wants the opportunity to engage with other communities regarding it. Steve Ober explained that he was selectman at the time and would like to see that time period put behind and pick this up as a brand new issue.

Chief Erickson pointed out that although Belmont and Sanbornton are neighbors, Laconia has a closer response time of 8-20 minutes versus Belmont's response time of 15-20 minutes and he doesn't see how Sanbornton would gain anything. He went on to say that he's not sure what the direction is what they are trying to create and asked what the goal of the committee is. The committee responded that they want to enhance services with better response times. It was noted that they have a fulltime Chief and the rest of the department are call & volunteer people. They struggle with calls between the hours of 5-8am and 4-7pm. Chairman Mooney commented that immediately she sees that Belmont has a full time department that is already very busy and Sanbornton doesn't and she sees the burden falling on Belmont because they are full time. She added that she probably would not be agreeable without Sanbornton having full time help. Chief Erickson theorized that with assistance to a ¼ of Sanbornton calls would leave Belmont understaffed. It was noted that the hours they would be looking for help are likely the same time frame that Belmont is busiest too. One individual commented on the possibility of a substation and more than one other community helping. Chairman Mooney noted that with the new chief and the arrangement Belmont currently has and the adjustments that have been made, there is no need for a substation and she wouldn't support a substation because Belmont doesn't need it. Selectman Cormier indicated that he thinks they have to look at larger area, including the Tilton station which he believes is better logistically located to assist Sanbornton. He asked if the committee had heard from other communities, David DeVoy explained that all the other bordering communities have agreed to meet with them. Chief Erickson offered that they may need to divide their community into quarters with perhaps a different community assisting each quadrant.

It was discussed that the committee may have to negotiate with each community by quadrant, as they are a big rural town, and there is no simple way to get around. Chief Erickson added that a 20 minute response time for Laconia is a long time in critical events. It was suggested that they maybe need to look at contracting ambulance services and maintaining just the fire department. Chief Erickson added that it all depends on what they are willing to pay for and what level of risk they are willing to take on, Sanbornton needs to determine the level of service they want to provide. It was noted that for 8 hrs. a day the community is getting good service but their busy time may be the busiest time for surrounding communities too. David DeVoy noted that their per diem staff can be an issue also because they can only work 29 hrs. per week by State regulations.

The committee explained it has other meetings scheduled with Laconia, Tilton, Franklin, New Hampton and Meredith. Chairman Mooney asked that the committee keep Belmont in the loop as they are willing to listen but not sure that Belmont can help. It was noted Chief Erickson will keep Belmont posted on what Laconia does. Selectman Pike suggested that they have one large meeting with all the selectmen from each community when they have finished with the individual communities. Chief Erickson expressed that was a great point because the fire chiefs can't change anything and they really need the political people such as the Selectmen that can make change involved. There was discussion of how fire departments were built in village areas, which are necessarily the most ideal location to service the entire community. Selectman Cormier commented that he would like to see someone work up a map by county for providing fire department services. Chief Erickson indicated that several years ago he had done mapping by county and will see if he can find it, noting that he felt there could be the potential for huge cost savings. It was noted that there are many areas outside of New England that provide services by county. Chief Erickson noted that perhaps a group like LRPC could be helpful in creating current mapping of services by county. It was discussed how much the fire service has changes with the area departments working more closely together than in years past. The Board thanked

the Sanbornton Fire Department Regionalization Committee for coming and asked that they be kept abreast of how there other meetings go.

### **Mill Masonry Restoration Discussion**

Chairman Mooney noted that the Board had called for the discussion regarding the Mill because they are at a cross roads and don't know what direction the taxpayers want to go in with the future of the building. The Board is looking for direction from taxpayers do we invest money in the building or look at other options.

Brian Watterson spoke asked about the \$500,000 discussed at the last meeting for repairs; Chairman Mooney explained that the estimate included the repair of a wall damaged in the fire as well as repointing and sealing the masonry with an estimation that the building will have to be resealed every 5 years or so. The goal with that estimate is to get the building weather tight. Brian commented that without a plan for the building he thinks the \$500,000 shouldn't be spent. Selectman Cormier pointed out the Board still envisions the Town Offices being in the building with the Senior Center left there as well. Brian expressed that he thinks a plan needs to be put out to the voters but feels it's too late in the year to do it for this March and it would feel rushed to the voters. Chairman Mooney discussed that in order to do anything with the building in the future the exterior needs to be preserved now. Selectman Cormier reminded that last year the Board came forward with a plan to completely renovate the building for Town Offices and it was not supported as the voters felt \$3+ million was too high. Through that process the Board did hear people ask about phasing in the renovation to the Mill. Selectman Cormier went on to say that for as long as he can remember the goal has been to utilize the Mill for that purpose, it just needs to be determined how to get there. There was discussion regarding ways to reduce the cost for a full renovation with the suggestion that perhaps the 4<sup>th</sup> floor isn't needed for space. It was noted that the building is still under the grant program until 2019 and if utilized before that for purposes other than what is allowed by the grant, the Town may be subject to reimbursement of some of those grant funds. TA Beaudin indicated that it may be in the area of \$100,000 that may be necessary to buy out the grant. It was noted that the doctor's office still has a lease too.

Selectman Pike explained that the Town did a space needs study when BPS came in and provided the estimate for the full renovation of the Mill. He explained however that it may be able to be done in phases. He suggested that some of the cost savings may be able to come from leaving more of the old Mill esthetics versus putting in ceilings and sheet rocking walls. He went on to say that the Town offices are far busier than people can imagine. Chairman Mooney commented that because the building is just being band aided the costs will continue to rise. Brian expressed that if the Board still supports the plan that they presented that they need to bring it back again.

Rick Segalini, a member of the Planning Board and was on the building committee when the last round of analysis was done on the Mill and other town buildings. Their option was to renovate and move Town offices there. He now thinks they should take the top off the Mill and create a memorial, tear it down and create a new Town office and Police department building on the current Mill site. He believes the building is too far gone and should have come down after the fire. People he has spoken to feel that the previous grant for renovations isn't even paid off yet and it needs so much work and in his opinion will continue to deteriorate for years to come. New construction is much more affordable and a new structure is so much more energy efficient.

Barbara Binette disagrees with tearing the building down and feels the Town has a responsibility to maintain the buildings that it owns. Supports the exterior work to preserve the building and feels it is a focal point of the community worth saving.

Joe Rhodes noted that he had sealed up the Mill several years ago. At that time he got a good look at the masonry and thinks that pointing the building would not be worth the cost. He feels that because the building went for 20 years without a roof the majority of the brick is too soft to preserve any further at this point. You have to have a good frame to make a repair worth it and he feels the Mill frame is not in good enough shape to put any more money into. Chairman Mooney acknowledge that the mason specialist out of Maine, Scott Whitaker had indicated the same. Joe commented that he likes old stuff, but you need to know when to let it go. He added that because the building is not insulated properly, a new building would be far more energy efficient. He feels the building has lost its attractive look due to the patchwork of the bricks that has been done.

Sonny Patten asked how the point and seal cost for the Mill rose from \$300,000 to \$500,000, Chairman Mooney explained that the first quote that was received for the work was \$300,000 however following the mason specialist, Scott Whitaker, looked at it, it was determined that the Southeast wall needed to be rebuilt, which is the side that the fire was on. Sonny noted that talk is that the building is deteriorating however it has been there 200 years and he believes it will be there way after we are all gone. He feels the building is worth saving and feels phasing in the project is the way to go. He did a walk through last week with Steve Paquin and feels that for \$10-12,000 the first floor could become usable space for the Land Use offices. The following year the second floor, and then leave the doctor's office as is and the fourth floor isn't needed or use it for storage. He thinks phasing it in will be less expensive and there will not be a need for a 3million dollar bond. Selectman Cormier acknowledge that he does like the phasing option as well but pointed out that the HVAC system on all floors is going to be a significant issue and expense. Sonny went on to say that with some paint, and flooring the Land Use office could be moved to the first floor of the Mill and alleviate some of the overcrowding at Town Hall. The second floor should be big enough for the rest of Town Hall. He thinks the Town needs to make the Mill work and worry about the Bank building later. Chairman Mooney indicated that part of the reason this has come up again is because they get questioned about what they are going to do with the Bank building and they realize that they need to solve the bigger issue first, the Mill. TA Beaudin added that she has been talking with the doctor's office and they really like being in the community, however they have outgrown the space that they are in. They want to expand services but don't have the space to do so. Sonny expressed that he thinks we can make the Mill work without it costing the taxpayer \$3 million.

Denise Naiva spoke both as a taxpayer and as a provider at the doctor's office. Having worked in the Mill for several years, she agrees that the HVAC system definitely needs help. There are many times that they are uncomfortable there either freezing or roasting. She agrees that the provider offices provide an important role in our community and the convenience is wonderful. If the office were to stay they definitely need more space. She liked the idea of the new building, if the space were large enough there may be a public/private building option. She appreciates the historical significance of the building but also working there she questions the safety of staff and patients as the lease moves towards 2019.

There was a brief discussion of the cost to demolish the Mill, with selectmen not having a firm amount at this time it was estimated perhaps between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Mark Mooney spoke explaining that several people have expressed how the building is compromised, the vote was 2-1 that said no to putting money into the building for Town offices, it is not a functional

building for Town offices and he feels it is a money pit and always will be. If the Town continues to put money into it, it will be lost. A new building in that location and incorporating the police department would be the best investment. The town should come up with a plan that the taxpayers will support and bond the money for a modern building that will last forever.

Donna Cilley stated that the taxpayers definitely said they didn't want Town offices in the building for many reasons, some of that being on going expenses. Town Hall is blowing out at the seams and is very busy and something needs to be done but the ideas suggested tonight regarding separating departments is not right. For years she has heard that the departments work too closely including sharing files, to be separated and will create a lot of issues. She feels the Town has a responsibility to look at services, the Town offices are needing expansion and updates and that was decided no. The Police department is blowing out at the seams too and is a huge liability. There is a need for Town offices and a Police Department and drawing straws for which one gets taken care of first shouldn't be the option. Take the emotion out of it, the Board would be doing a disservice if they keep band aiding the Mill. What is the community needs assessment and how do we satisfy that long range. Donna expressed that it appears bonding is the only answer for funding. Chairman Mooney commented that the community is fortunate that they only have a small amount of bond debt at this point. Donna expressed that she thinks perhaps the Town should look at what the acreage and area where the Mill is will support for another structure, parking, etc. Including the option of the removal of the Bank building for additional space. She added that she and Mark Mooney were selectmen at the time of the fire and they were told that the brick was soft and porous at that time and would have an everlasting effect. And then it sat in the elements for years. Selectman Cormier commented that some of his frustration over the years has been that they have proposed many different options including new construction, renovation, Town Hall, Police Department and every time its no. He went on to say that if it's no to new construction and no to renovation, then he is out of ideas. Doesn't know another idea and eventually it is going to have to be yes, determining what that is, is difficult. Whether its new construction of Town office/Police Department, or maybe a public/private endeavor with the doctor's office and it's still no, then do you just keep bringing it back? Maybe that what we'll have to do. Economically and efficiency wise he would prefer the new building idea which provides for exactly what the needs are without having to try to make another set up work. Can still make it a nice center piece to the community, it may cost a little bit more but it is money better spent. Appreciates everyone's comments because it helps give the Board direction. It was discussed that there had been several building assessment studies over the past few years.

Linda Frawley spoke regarding the funding issue, noting she has spent time volunteering and writing grants including PlanNH, there is no grant money for demolition. Chairman Mooney explained that given what the Town has dealt with on the funding on the Mill they will not be looking for grant funds at this time. Previously the Heritage Commission provided funding options including FEMA funds, \$350,000 for emergency funds that the 4<sup>th</sup> floor may have qualified for. Plus funding for handicap and elderly access for existing buildings, municipal masterplan for public facilities amongst others. There was discussion that the Mill and the buildings are national registry eligible, because Belmont is a factory village district. Selectman Cormier asked Linda if the Board where to decide to demo the building did she think someone would file an injunction from a historic perspective; Linda would not speculate and does not know. However it has become a Mill of importance to not only the residents here but state wide and it is surprising well known throughout the State. But she feels that cost and use are further aspects of the building that need to be considered. Right priority and right approach need to be taken for any kind of utilization of the Mill or other buildings in Town. As well as it needs to be brought to the taxpayers in a timely fashion, time is needed to develop interest and talk to people.

Barbara Binette inquired about what funds the Town had set aside to maintain buildings and couldn't that be used for work on the Mill, Selectman Pike indicated that the Town does have funds for building maintenance and they are being utilized for issues that arise and need to be addressed, such as doors and windows. She reiterated that the Town needs to maintain the buildings that they have. The Board expressed that they are continuing to maintain the Town owned buildings including the Mill as it is being occupied by businesses.

Kevin Sturgeon after hearing everything tonight is still confused, he did a self-tour of the Mill building, viewed the bricks, etc. and then went over to talk to the mason doing the work on the Library, as well he has spoken to other mason's, with Joe Rhodes advising him that the Mill had been sealed in the past. Trying to make an informed decision so he's looking at all the information and he does like old mill buildings so does have a sentimental factor. Is this Mill worth saving, others with experience and knowledge have given their input. He commented that it has been said that voters have expressed that they are going to vote no on everything and that isn't true because for years they have voted yes for highway construction funds as well as many other items. Even this past year voted yes on a bond for the Hoadley road project, so the voters aren't cheap. He feels the people he has talked to are confused as well and will they continue to vote no, maybe. And he feels again this is coming forward a little last minute and may need more time to develop. Feels that a bigger plan needs to be put together for the use of the Town buildings and there may be too many options at this point. There was discussion regarding putting something on the ballot that is more theoretical, without dollar amounts to try to determine if the taxpayers want to save the building or not, with nothing binding in the language. Chairman Mooney explained that the Board is trying to determine what the voters want to do and perhaps if the Mill is renovated the Bank building would come down because it isn't needed and a green space would be created or maybe that isn't what they want at all. When she voted on the Bank property it was for the land because the building itself is very unattractive, and she thought it would be demoed. Kevin commented that the Town needs to have less buildings so there is less to maintain.

Denise Naiva really liked the idea of having 2 or 3 options presented to the voters but thinks that the cost does need to be included because that will be the first question asked. Having a plan is very important too because just having something for the space isn't good, need to know what you are going to do with it. There was discussion regarding putting together options but getting to the taxpayers when they don't attend meetings becomes the challenge to get the feedback. The Board has tried many different avenues in the past to inform the voters and get feedback with very minimal response. There was a brief discussion regarding send out a mailing to everyone and holding meetings at different times and the Board agreed that all of that had been tried in the past.

The Board thanked everyone for coming out to the discussion and noted they would plan to discuss the Mill again at their next meeting on December 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Other New Business**  
**LRMHP Co-op Request**

TA Beaudin reviewed with the Board a request from LRMHP Co-op to abate the taxes on 12 Tee Dee Drive so that they can demo it as it is in poor condition, explaining that they had previously requested relief on 6 Tee Dee Drive which was the wrong unit; those taxes have not been abated. The outstanding taxes are \$452.56.

Selectman Pike moved to abate the taxes on 12 Tee Dee Drive as requested. Selectman Cormier seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Warrant Article Discussion**

The Board discussed potential warrant article language relative to the future of the Mill. TA Beaudin indicated to the Board that she has sent requests to 2 demolition companies for quotes. It was discussed that the questions could be noted as nonbinding. TA Beaudin noted it could be done as a referendum type question, she added that she will come up with language for the Board to review. More detail regarding the questions can be discussed at the deliberative session. There was discussion of handing out questionnaires on voting day, but it was noted that they can't be collected that day they would have to be mailed back or dropped off at Town Hall and they have to be handed out outside of the voting area on the street.

The Board also discussed that if the vote was no on options provided it may need to go to a special town meeting, which TA Beaudin advised that if it involved money it would have to be an emergency type thing with the courts having to grant permission for the meeting, if there is no money involved in the special town meeting it does not require court approval. Additionally the Board discussed the possibility of a joint effort with the doctor's office on a new building, and it was discussed that the area in question may not be large enough for that size building requirement because of parking.

### **Prescott Hill Sewer Line Discussion**

TA Beaudin explained that the Planning Board held a meeting regarding zoning ordinance changes that would affect the top of Prescott Hill area. In addition through this process there is an existing private sewer line in the area in question. TA Beaudin recommended to the Board that a warrant article authorizing the Selectmen to modify the existing sewer system. Selectman Cormier commented that he doesn't have a problem doing that but doesn't think it will pass. It was discussed that there will be no funding authorization included in the article, it strictly gives the Board authorization to make decisions regarding private/public sewer lines in the future. TA Beaudin indicated that she can add language that expresses that there is no funding related to the article. The Board may consider similar language for water lines once TA Beaudin consults with counsel regarding it.

### **Old Business**

#### **Bandstand Deed/Survey Update**

TA Beaudin reminded the Board that at their last meeting they had requested that she get quotes to have survey work done in the Bandstand area. She received 2 quotes, one from Steven Smith & Assoc. for \$5,800, but they are not able to do it immediately so it could be late winter before they could provide results and the other from Jeffrey Green at \$3,000 and would be able to do it quicker, both licensed surveyors and Rick Ball felt either would provide a quality plan. The Heritage Commission has been advised that there will be a delay in getting the survey done and they have sent a letter to LCHIP requesting an extension for the final report.

The Board agreed to have Mr. Green do the work for \$3,000.

## **27 Spruce Drive Deed**

TA Beaudin provided to the Board for signature the deed to 27 Spruce Drive which had been taken by Tax Collector's deed and now is being deeded to Pine Gardens so they can demo/rehab to get back on the tax role. The Board signed the deed. In addition Mr. Dupont had reached out to TA Beaudin regarding a property he received a tax collectors deed notice on last week that he has taken ownership of after it was abandoned 19 Circle Drive, wants abated so he can demo/rehab, the taxes owed are \$1246.00.

Selectman Pike moved to abate the taxes on 19 Circle Drive. Selectman Cormier seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

## **Library Cameras**

At a prior meeting the Board had discussed with the Library Trustees the possibility of adding cameras to the front of Town Hall to cover the Library and part of Bandstand Park next to the Library. The current system at Town Hall can't accommodate more cameras however A&B Lock has agreed to put a larger module in and take back the small module and only charge the upgrade cost of \$260-315. In addition the 2 cameras will cost \$255-295 per camera. The Board agreed to buy the upgraded module and cameras.

## **Non-public Session**

Chairman Mooney called the non-public session to order at 7:22 p.m. in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (b). Roll call was taken; those present and voting were Ruth Mooney, Ron Cormier, and Jon Pike. Also present was TA Jeanne Beaudin.

Chairman Mooney closed the non-public session at 7:50 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

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Ruth Mooney, Chairman

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Ronald Cormier, Vice Chairman

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Jon Pike, Selectman