

**TOWN OF NEW HAMPTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OFFICES
NEW HAMPTON, NH 03256**

June 3, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT: Selectmen Paul Tierney, Charles Bartley and Kenneth Mertz were present.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Boucher was present. Police Chief Doug Salmon and Fire Chief Michael Drake arrived very shortly after 5:00 PM.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Paul Tierney called the regular meeting of the Board to order at 5:00 p.m. to work on building permits.

WORK SESSION: The Fire and Police Chiefs and the Public Works Director were invited to the meeting to discuss their respective inspection costs and permit fees. The Board wished to determine what expenses are involved in inspections so that a reasonable user-based fee could be established to cover real costs. The Board asked the Department heads to prepare a listing of what they charge for now and what their recommendations are for any new fees or rates changes they feel are appropriate.

Chief Drake noted the number of things requiring his inspection have gone up exponentially. He noted for a number of hours that he is doing this work he has to bring in other staff to cover some of his other responsibilities – like grant writing, equipment inspection, etc. He noted he is grateful for the willingness of his firefighters to take the time from jobs or home to do as much as they do. There is a cost to the town for additional hours when he has to bring in staff. He also noted that for more and more of the items he has to inspect, he has to call the Fire Marshall's office to review special technical items in commercial buildings and school buildings.

Mr. Boucher noted that Building Permit fees were based on square footage in Plymouth. The difference between a Walmart-sized project and a simple driveway permit could be many hours. Mr. Mertz suggested a breakout between a residential, small commercial, large commercial and subdivision building permits. Chief Salmon mentioned an example when a driveway permit on a class 6 road required a number of site visits. It was not a subdivision, but it was a complicated situation. Mr. Tierney noted there are a number of areas in town that could be like that example. These situations have to be rolled into the conversation on fees to cover costs.

Chief Drake stated he liked the idea of a staggered fee. He noted the number of inspections a project like Mobil on the Run required of him, and noted a discussion with the state inspector which detailed the costs the State charged for their inspections. He noted the New Hampton School puts a heavy burden on the town, for example, but pays no taxes. State law requires the

Fire Chief to do inspections for work on that campus, and other locations, which really requires an engineer. An option is to hire an engineer as a consultant. It was noted by Mr. Mertz that the Planning Board does have the ability to ask applicants to pay for studies or other expertise as needed. The Chief noted that some situations can change and it doesn't come before the Planning Board again. He noted the Mobil on The Run project was approved to be open 24 hours. They have since cut back their hours, but fire suppression equipment which was not required when it was staffed 24 hours is not present.

Mr. Tierney asked that all department heads work up their recommendations and needs for other permits and fees in two weeks, for the next working session on June 17th.

Technical review is going to be required in more situations by law; for day care facilities, for more businesses. Chief Drake noted referral names available on the State website for engineers and consultants to do these kinds of things. Mr. Tierney stated that the building permits can have a fee and a requirement that an engineer to do the technical inspection at an additional cost.

The Police Chief mentioned he would like to see fees for false alarm calls be addressed for repeat offenders. He also suggested that report fees and other services need to be reviewed. Just printing photographs for copies of reports requested entails a significant cost in toner and man-hours. He would like to set a flat fee and provide the photos on a CD whether it is one photo or a dozen.

The Board thanked the Department heads for their time and their input and asked their thoughts and recommendations be completed in the next two weeks.

*Other Department Business
with the Board*

Mr. Boucher was asked about the Freon reclamation system, and was asked about a requisition for some tanks that the Board received last week. Mr. Boucher advised they purchased re-usable tanks. They had disposable tanks previously. He advised the Town has seen a modest profit from the purchase of the reclamation system and will see a greater profit from this point forward because of the permanent tanks.

Mr. Boucher has submitted a requisition for renting a wheel excavator and a roller from June to middle of July and several quotes. The Board will review them and get back to him next week.

Chief Drake wanted to speak to the Board regarding a small oil leak in the smaller ambulance. This will be addressed next week as well.

Building Permit Discussion

Copies of building permits from several different towns were provided to the Selectmen. Some were a number of cents per square foot, some were a flat fee (215.00 for Sanbornton) and some were a mixture of a flat fee plus a figure per square foot.

Mr. Mertz noted that the difference between a single family and a commercial site were significant. Sanbornton has a permit fee of 30 cents per square foot with a cap of \$215.00. Mrs. Vose prepared a notation with the number of permits she processes in a given year and her time. Mr. Tierney noted he wanted to cover administrative expenses and the department head costs would be separate. Assessor fees, however, should be included. Mr. Mertz was concerned administrative costs would go up with an ala carte fee schedule. Mr. Mertz noted that having the assessor look at the same property every year when a project isn't finished is creating an expense that may not be covered by the fee. This was discussed and it was noted that a building fee expires after a year, but a renewal is at no cost.

It costs approximately \$75.00 for the assessor visit to a new construction project. The first review is included because the property is being added to the tax roll, but the second year the visit has to be covered. Mr. Tierney suggested he liked the idea of a set fee plus a square footage fee. Ashland is \$30 plus .06 per square foot for a 2,000 square foot home is: \$120.00 and for a 10,000 square foot home is: \$600.00. Mr. Mertz questioned the actual cost to the town. If the town had a building inspector there would be a greater expense for the larger project, but without one, real costs are lower.

Furnace inspections by the Fire Chief should be a separate fee from the Building Permit. Ambulance fees are separate and go into a separate revenue account for the Fire Department. The question was raised regarding Fire Chief's inspection fees going into the Fire Department revenues. Would they then go into the General fund after the end of the year? Mr. Tierney will check into the statutes and report back to the Board. Mr. Mertz again asked about the difference between residential and commercial building permit given that the Town doesn't have a building inspector. A rate has to be defensible and explainable. Basing a fee on a 2,000 square foot new construction, the rates for the towns around New Hampton range from \$150 to \$600. All the towns, with the possible exception of Center Harbor have building inspectors.

The Selectmen agreed that they have had a good discussion tonight, and will continue the work in two weeks as time permits after the meeting with the Department heads.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION:

Chief Salmon needed to speak to the Board in non-public session before his response was required on a matter in three days. As long as the Board is being informed of a matter and the issue does not require any action from the Board, Mr. Tierney suggested they go into non-public session. The motion to go into Non-Public Session was made by Mr. Bartley at 6:01 PM, seconded by Mr. Mertz. The reason was to notify the Board of potential Town liability, RSA 91A:3(c). Present were all the Selectmen and Police Chief Salmon. The motion was approved.

RESUMING PUBLIC SESSION:

The motion to come out of non-public session at 6:24 PM was made by Mr. Mertz, seconded by Mr. Bartley. The motion passed. Minutes were sealed

for two years on the recommendation of Chief Salmon.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Lucas has had personal matters that required her to be out of the office for up to the next week. Mr. Tierney stated he would be working with Mrs. Vose to keep on top of anything that should come up. The other selectmen also noted their availability as needed.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Selectman Bartley to adjourn, seconded by Selectman Tierney. The vote passed and the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin J. Harmon

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