

1. Convene the meeting.

Vice Chairman Campbell convened the Board at 7:05 on the above date. He introduced the Board: Joe Pace, Bob Eastman, and Lionel Ingram. Also present was George Olson, Town Manager. Absent: Chairman Paul Binette.

2. Minutes of the Board of Selectmen's meetings of January 19 and 20.

Mr. Pace moved, seconded by Mr. Ingram, to accept the minutes of the January 19 meeting and the public hearing of January 20, 2004. SO VOTED.

3. Bid awards – Chemicals

Vice Chairman Campbell asked Mr. Olson to read the bid awards for chemical purchases. Mr. Olson read from the attached list. **It was moved by Mr. Pace, second by Mr. Eastman, to award the bids as presented. SO VOTED.**

4. Employee Health Insurance – Shelley Walts and Amy Gilbert, Health Insurance Trust

Vice Chairman Campbell asked Mr. Olson to introduce the topic. Mr. Olson described discussions that had taken place during the budget setting process on the details and cost of health insurance for Town employees. In response, he asked representatives of the Health Insurance Trust, the Trust that provides health coverage for the Town's employees, to come to a meeting and discuss rate setting, the cost of insurance and steps being taken to help contain costs. He introduced Shelley Walts who came to the mic. Ms. Walts introduced those with her this evening and asked Judy Yeaton to go over how Exeter's rates were set for calendar year 2004. (See attached).

Following Ms. Yeaton's presentation, Ms. Walts addressed the issue of developing strategies to reduce costs and improve employee and dependent health. Following her presentation Ms. Walts introduced Amy Gilbert who spoke on the topic of lifestyle changes (see attached). The emphasis of the presentation was looking for opportunities to reduce the number of claims that are preventable by making changes in lifestyle and, in turn, reducing cost while improving the health of the workforce.

Mr. Ingram noted the number of back injuries and asked Mr. Olson if the Town was doing enough training in this area. Mr. Olson responded that he felt that there was adequate training being done and that most of the injuries were unavoidable particularly given the difficulties faced by EMT's and paramedics in transporting patients.

Vice Chairman Campbell asked if the Safety Committee should be provided the information on training opportunities. It was agreed that while those training sessions having to do with safety-related activities should be promoted by the Safety Committee, the Human Resources Director, Barbara Blenk was responsible for scheduling training on issues dealing with lifestyle changes.

There being no further questions of the visitors, Vice Chairman Campbell thanked them for their presentation.

5. NH Martial Arts Academy – request for sign.

Vice Chairman Campbell, noting that the applicant was not present, postponed discussion in the hope that she would arrive prior to the end of the meeting.

6. Request to address the Board – Gary Ingram re property tax abatement

Vice Chairman Campbell asked Mr. Ingram to come to the mic. Mr. Ingram identified himself as a resident of East Kingston and the owner of property at 21 Lincoln Street. Mr. Ingram's concern is that he bought the property at 21 Lincoln Street in November of 2003. At that time there was no structure on the parcel. As of April 2003, Dot's Flower Shop sat on the land. Mr. Ingram is questioning why he is required to pay taxes on a building that no longer stands and was not on the parcel when he bought it. He asked the Board to address his unique situation.

Vice Chairman Campbell noted that no formal application had been received to date and that the Board, with the recommendation of the Assessor, would address the request when it came before them. He directed Mr. Ingram to submit the necessary paperwork to the Assessor's Office.

7. Preservation Easements on Historic Barns

Vice Chairman Campbell asked Mr. Olson to address this issue. Mr. Olson reported on the existence of a new program directed at saving old barns in the State. The program allows for tax abatements on barns over 75 years old that are or were used for agricultural purposes. In return, the barn owner agrees to maintain the barn for a 10-year period and the Town agrees not to increase property taxes if maintenance is done on the barn. He went on to state that the Town has received its first such request and that the required public hearing on the application will be held at a later meeting.

8. Permits

Katie Childs representing Winterfest 2004 requests permission to use the Town Hall-Main Floor for a swing band performance on February 15, from 12 to 5 PM. **Mr. Eastman moved to approve, second by Mr. Pace, SO VOTED.**

Lisa Crowley representing the NH Department of Revenue Administration requests permission to use the Nowak Room for an educational presentation on the low and moderate-income homeowners property tax relief program on March 3, 2004, from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. **Mr. Pace moved to approve, second by Mr. Ingram. SO VOTED.**

Maureen Barrows representing The David Barrows Adventure Fund requests permission to hold a cycling road race in the downtown on June 29, 2004 from 4 until 8 PM. **Mr. Eastman moved to approve, with the understanding that the Chief of Police will approve the route and traffic control, second by Mr. Pace. SO VOTED.**

9. Town Manager Items

Vice Chairman Campbell requested Mr. Olson address the topic. Mr. Olson noted the upcoming Deliberative Session to be held at the Town Hall beginning at 9 AM on February 7, 2004; the fact that the next Selectmen's meeting will be held on February 9; and that those interested in taping

comments on warrant article could call the office at 778-0591 and set up a time next Thursday or Friday.

10. Selectmen's Committee reports

Mr. Pace reported that the Arts Committee will be meeting tomorrow evening, February 3 in the Town Offices; that this past Saturday new art was hung in the Town Offices for all to enjoy and thanked everyone who participated in last Saturday's and Wednesday night's visioning session and in the sessions held over the past 3 years.

Mr. Ingram reported on last week's Safety Committee meeting, noting how few accidents there had been over the winter months and reported that the Council on Aging will be meeting to go over the 2004 warrant articles.

Mr. Campbell reported on attending the visioning session and the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee where the discussion focused on rate increases necessitated by the construction of the proposed water treatment plant.

In the absence of the applicant under agenda item 5 above, Mr. Pace moved the matter be tabled until such time as the individual requests the Board to hear her request again. Second by Mr. Ingram. SO VOTED.

11. Public Comments

Vice Chairman Campbell asked if there were any comments from the audience. **There being none, it was moved by Mr. Pace, second by Mr. Ingram, to adjourn. SO VOTED.** Time: 8:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



George N. Olson
Town Manager