

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2007

Present: Robert Reagan
Kristina Burnett
Jay Waldner

Dana Hadley

Chairman Robert Reagan opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. by leading all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPOINTMENT

7:00 p.m. Earl Charbono-Road Agent
❖ Air Compressor

The Board met with Road Agent, Earl Charbono. Mr. Charbono was in to ask the Board for approval to purchase an air compressor that is available through the state surplus program. This is a compressor that has been used approximately 13 hours, it is a Vane Tank-Less Compressor with a John Deere diesel engine. The cost for the compressor is \$3,500.00 and the Road Agent would like to charge the purchase to his account for Road Reconstruction 01-4312.30-730. The Board had reservations for a purchase at this time as the 2007 budget will not be ratified by the voters until March. They had sent a memo dated January 16th to all department heads informing them that they would not be approving any purchase order for “major purchases” until after the Town Meeting in March when the voting results as applicable to the budget is known.1

Selectman Reagan said that he is concerned about the Town’s road conditions. He would like to devote as much of the Highway Block as possible to directly impact and effect road repairs.

Earl Charbono said that he had not picked up his mail in the previous week and was not aware of the memo until after he had submitted the purchase order for the compressor. He said that he feels that purchasing this compressor would be in the best interest of the

Town. He said that there were seven compressors at state surplus and six of the seven have been sold due to the new condition of the compressors and the reasonable price. The Town used to have a compressor

but it was sold. The Town has a jack-hammer but does not have a compressor to power it. The Town could use this equipment next summer when several manholes will need to be lifted and raised when work on Downtown streets is done. It is inconvenient to rent a compressor and there is a possibility that one may not be available at the time it is needed. This item is not vital to the Town's operation but he feels that this is a very attractive price and he asked the Board to approve this purchase order surplus.

Selectman Reagan agreed that the air compressor is a good buy. He said however, that at whatever the price is, it would not be a good buy if there are not adequate funds to purchase it.

Road Agent Charbono said he is not wasting any money in his budget and he would not support the purchase if it did not make economic sense.

Selectman Reagan asked how having this equipment would help accomplish goals that the Road Agent had for the year. He said that in the proposal received from Blaktop it included for raising the manhole covers.

Road Agent Charbono said that this could be done by Blaktop but it would significantly add to the cost and would be more cost effective if the Town could do that work.

Selectman Reagan asked what was involved in raising a manhole cover?

Road Agent Charbono said the cover and the rim need to be removed and concrete or another material added to bring the cover to be even with the road. This is a time consuming operation and when he asked for the quote from Blaktop he did not have the equipment for the job. He said that if the department had this compressor and used its own labor forces he could get the job done for considerably less money than by having Blaktop do it. He said that if the Town were to have to rent this equipment there would be lost productivity for a man to go to Lebanon, pick up the equipment, bring it to Canaan and then have to return it. He said that many times jobs come up unexpectedly and by having the compressor he would be able to use the Town's jack hammer. He feels that this would be a good investment as there is no other Town department that has this piece of equipment.

Selectman Waldner said that the question is not so much if the Town should have a compressor but at the time the purchase is being made. He said that this was the case when the new four-wheel drive truck was purchased as it was not discussed at the deliberative session and it makes the Town look like they are jumping around without a plan in place. If there had been discussion on this purchase then people would be less likely to be critical.

Road Agent Charbono said that he has been a road agent for several years, both his current term and in the past and he is charged with the smooth operation of his department and the overall welfare of the Town's roads. He is responsible for being sure that his department secures the items that it needs to do its job. He would not ask for the Board to purchase a piece of equipment that he felt was not necessary.

Selectman Waldner said that he agrees with Selectman Reagan in that he wants to see as much money from the Highway Block grant used for direct repairs to the roads and not for the purchase of equipment. He is not comfortable with the reasoning that purchases using the Highway Block Grant money are purchases being provided by the state. This is money that is earmarked to be

used on the Town's roads. He said that the memo sent by the Board was to remind Department Heads that the 2007 Budget is not yet approved.

Earl Charbono said that he understood the purpose of the memo. He said that he was concerned about the cuts made to his budget but that he would do the most that he could to accomplish as much as is possible. He discussed several projects that will not be done this year.

Selectman Waldner asked what the Blaktop proposal will be if the Town is able to do the work to raise the manholes?

The road agent said that he did not know. The proposal that he had gotten from Blaktop was to help him in his budgetary process. If the department is able to do the manhole work and the job specifications change he will get another proposal from vendors at that time so he has firm figures to work with.

Selectman Burnett asked if there is a possibility of borrowing a compressor from a neighboring town such as Lebanon or Hanover?

Earl Charbono said that he does not like to borrow equipment. In the past when he has borrowed items he finds that if there is a problem with the equipment he is then obligated to have the equipment repaired or replaced.

Selectman Reagan said that two months of rental fees is \$1,300.

Earl Charbono said that that is not a bad price but he is concerned if the equipment would be available when he needs it.

Budget Committee Member Denis Salvail said that he wants to see the overall budget cut. He said that he feels that the compressor is a valuable tool for the highway department to have. He said that the Board cannot expect jobs to be completed if the highway department does not have the proper tools. He said that people would not expect a carpenter to do his job without a saw. He said that there are real inconsistencies of where the Board wants to cut.

Selectman Reagan said that there are several good reasons to purchase this compressor. He said that primary concern is that the 2007 budget is not approved yet.

Earl Charbono said that he had not received the memo from the Board asking for the curtailment of major purchases until after he submitted the purchase order.

Selectman Waldner said that by putting this type of issue into a Public Meeting it improves Public perception and helps everyone understand reasons for the purchase. He said that after this discussion he is ready to sign the purchase order.

Motion: Selectman Waldner and Seconded by Selectman Burnett to sign the purchase and direct the Road Agent to Purchase the Air Compressor from the State Surplus.

Vote in the affirmative.

OLD BUSINESS

❖ Minutes from January 2, 2007

Selectmen Jay Waldner said the he had a number of concerns regarding the minutes. He reviewed the minutes and suggested several corrections.

Dana Hadley, Town Administrator said that he will work with the minutes to correct them and will bring them back to the Board for approval at a subsequent meeting.

❖ Continued preliminary work for Town Warrant Articles

The Board continued work on the warrant articles. Town Administrator, Dana Hadley advised the Board that the Article asking for adoption of the Town's Zoning Plan has been moved to the second article.

NEW BUSINESS

❖ Notice received of Municipal Official's Workshop on auto Salvage Yard

The Board reviewed a notice from New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services announcing a workshop being offered for Municipal Officials to review amended state law changes in regard to Town Junk Yard Licensing Procedures. After discussion the Board and the Town Administrator will attend the workshop on Wednesday, February 21st, being held in Chocorua.

❖ Letter received from Patrick Smith and Jeanette Escano regarding road condition of Grafton Turnpike Road

The Board reviewed a letter received from Patrick Smith and Jeannette Escano of Grafton Turnpike Road. They wrote concerning the condition of Grafton Turnpike. The Board asked the Town Administrator to write a letter to Mr. and Ms. Escano to acknowledge the letter and to explain how the Town prioritizes road repairs, based on budgeting, public safety and how repair work is scheduled.

❖ Newsletter from NH Technology Center "Road Business"

The Town Administrator shared with the Board an article in the newsletter from the NH Technology Center regarding a study done on perceived safety of crosswalks.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Selectman Waldner and Seconded by Selectman Burnett to adjourn.

Vote in the affirmative.

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dana I. Hadley, Town Administrator

Minutes Accepted by the Board of Selectmen on February 13, 2007

(Footnotes)

1 A copy of this memo is available in the Selectmen's Office upon request.