

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

January 24, 2012

Board Members in attendance- Margaret Schillemat, Chair, Warren Hammack, Winston (Bud) French, and Administrative Assistant Edie Drinkwater

Others on the Agenda or present- David Voymas, Russ Thomas, Barry Tolman, Maury Collins, Chief Pratt, Officer Brian Lord, Hope Lothrop

At 7:00 PM the meeting was called to order by Chair, Margaret Schillemat.

David Voymas presented a request from the Planning Board that they be allowed to use the Town Office for their regular monthly meetings. David stated his understanding was that security reasons had prohibited all boards from using the office for meetings. The board agreed to consider his request. David reported that the planning board is still in need of a clerk and their search continues. Bud asked for a general overview of a normal Planning Board meeting. David provided a general review and stated that many times files and maps are needed that are only available in the Town Office.

Warren brought up the issue of an occupancy permit. He questioned whether the criteria could be added to the building permit process. The selectmen need to explore if it would be deemed neglectful not to address the issue since the public health aspect needs to be considered in such matters.

The meeting was interrupted as Betsy Church requested use of the office computer. She was told it was not available because at that time the computer service provider was working on the system to correct some program issues. Betsy became angry and after a brief statement voicing her objection left the office.

Next on the agenda was Brian Murphy regarding a land issue involving his claim of ownership of land abutting his property. He did not show for his appointment.

Russ Thomas came in next to present a new letter to the board. Barry Tolman and Maury Collins entered the audience at this time. Margaret welcomed them all and told Russ he could leave his letter and it would be read by the selectmen. He was then told by Margaret that the letter would not be read aloud at the meeting and would not be attached as part of the approved minutes of the meeting. Since the letter was a repeat of previously presented letters the board considered it redundant. Russ was presenting nothing new and all of his grievances and those of others were currently being taken under advisement.

Clearly angered by this, Russ referred to the board as "Pod People" He shouted "We want answers, we want apologies and we want the door unlocked. He then threw down some town report from other town stating we want Police reports like these. (Some of the reports dated back to 1975)

Maury Collins then requested permission to speak. Margaret deferred to Warren and Bud then all agreed to allow a brief statement. Maury asked why the door to the upstairs was locked and why so

many executive or Non Public sessions were held. Warren recounted that the board has explained numerous times (to the extent allowed by law) that each session addressed Personnel and or legal issues with possible consequences being litigation. Warren stated further that there was never a time when access for those who need it was not allowed. They always had access but they want to dictate the terms and right now that is just not possible. Warren then directly posed questions to Maury. "Would you want the town to fall victim of litigation ? " "Would you want the reputation of a person tarnished as a result of that access?"

Maury asked if there was a timeline when answers would be given. A flurry of comments suggested the presenters may seek media attention or legal action for answers. All were then informed that the State's Attorney General is and has been involved with the matter.

Bud told the audience that the board understands that the answers given each week are not what people want to hear.

Barry Tolman angrily stated he believes the selectmen have not even read the letters presented. Warren turned to Barry and informed him clearly that was not true. In fact this issue has consumed their attention due to your demands for information the board simply cannot release publicly. As Warren turned away a motion by Barry as well as multiple comments caused a mild disturbance prompting Chief Pratt to take a seat beside Barry. Chief Pratt tried to quietly calm Barry but Barry placed his hand to Chief Pratt's chest saying the Police had no right to be there. Chief Pratt continued to calm Barry as Margaret called for order to be restored to the meeting.

With order restored Bud told the audience the selectmen are representing the Town of Nelson not just a few people. He reminded Maury of his own term as selectman and that sometimes the public simply cannot be given access to sensitive information that has the potential to cause harm to the town.

Maury said he found it hard to believe that one incident caused all this but ask "Can we do anything to help?"

Margaret replied Yes, Please be patient.

The audience and all presenters left the meeting. With full order restored a review of all paperwork was completed. It was noted that the social service agencies have held their financial request down again this year. In a complete breakdown of the services provided to Nelson residents it was gratefully noted that the services provided far exceed the annual request. All agreed the town is most fortunate for this resource and will recommend this warrant at Town Meeting.

Hope Lothrop stopped in to pick up the school check which John Shea picked up earlier in the day to deliver to her. She thanked the board and left

Two dedications were discussed for the town report as well as the front and back covers. Edie indicated that the compilation continues in preparation for printing with many department reports already in.

The letter presented earlier by Russ Thomas was read and reviewed and a unanimous decision was made to place the letter on file.

At 9:32 PM Margaret moved to go into Non-Public session in accordance with RSA 91: A II (a&c) to discuss personnel matters. Seconded by Bud and agreed by unanimous vote.

Re-entered Public Session:

The public session reopened at 10:30 PM. It was noted for the public minutes that prior to closing the Non-public session a motion was made by Margaret to seal the Non-public minutes into perpetuity. It was seconded by Bud and passed by unanimous vote.

There was then a discussion about the completed policy and procedure book. Copies will be printed and passed out to all town employees and volunteers. Every effort is being made to complete the copies within a week to 10 days. A question arose concerning library employees and whether they fall under the Town Policy and Procedures. The LGC will be contacted on this matter.

With all business complete Margaret made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Bud and was followed by a unanimous vote to adjourn at 11:40 PM.

January 24, 2012

Margaret Schillemat

Warren Hammack

Winston O. French