

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES OF JUNE 14, 2004 APPROVED 7-19-04

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on June 14, 2004 at the Town Office by Chairman Jonathan Wood. Members present: Norman Weldy, Paul Brown, Dick Wood and Jack Barnes. Also present: Town Manager Richard Bates.

Chairman Wood led a salute to the flag and a moment of silence for departed citizens.

Chairman Wood stated this is a Work Session, however, we are going to carry on some unfinished business that has to do with camp fire permit restrictions. Mr. Don Helides would like to speak about this.

Mr. Helides presented the first page of a petition that has been signed by residents to change the current restrictions of camp fire permits being issued daily for lots under two acres of land. Mr. Helides will bring the petition in its entirety when all the signatures are received.

Chief Pratt then spoke about why the camp fire permits for less than one acre lots were issued in the first place. Where houses are congested and closer together there are complaints from neighbors being bothered by the fires. After trying this for almost a year, we find we are not directly addressing the problem. We are now requesting permission to change this to allow seasonal permits to all residents and a daily permit to anyone that violates the fire permit restrictions as per Res 5601.04 (copy attached).

The hours residents are able to get a permit from the Fire Department were discussed.

Chief Salois spoke about complaints received last year and how these complaints usually tend to develop into a neighborhood issue, where you have conflicting sides. It ends up being a police-related issue with one or two families or multiple families in conflict with each other and becomes a burden to try and weed through that.

Selectmen Weldy asked Chief Salois to explain the law that covers making false accusations to a law enforcement officer.

Chief Salois stated that it is a false report of a crime. The problem is proving that it was a false report. Some of it may have occurred at the time, but when we arrive is not occurring at that time. To actually prove that someone called up reporting something that they thought was an issue that did not occur is a difficult one to prove.

Chairman Wood asked Mr. Helides if, after listening to the reasons why it went into effect, he has changed his mind.

Mr. Helides asked Chief Pratt about cooking in a campfire that is in a fireplace and if there are restrictions on that.

Chief Pratt stated that cooking in a pit can be done throughout the day, as long as you are actually cooking.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES OF JUNE 14, 2004 APPROVED 7-19-04

Chairman Wood asked for comments from the public.

Comment from a neighbor about the restrictive nature of the hours the Fire Department is open to issue permits.

Discussion about weekly permits versus seasonal permits for less than 2 acre lots. Chief Pratt agrees that this would be a reasonable alternative. Further discussion about what a campfire is and what a brush fire is. What is acceptable for a campfire and what is not.

Town Manager Bates stated his concern over a weekly permit with police and fire being caught in between neighbor disputes.

Discussion regarding the issue of abuse of the camp fire permits and if the regulations are not followed properly, the resident will be required to get a permit on a daily basis.

Complaints will be followed up and if there is no violation it will not fall in the category of complaints. If continued complaints come in and there is no violation, then it will be fall under the filing of a false report and will be handled as a false report and will become a police issue.

William Dorrance, 27 Governors Drive comes forward to speak. He is Mr. Helides' neighbor and does not have a problem with Mr. Helides, but where Mr. Helides has his campfire it is within five feet of Mr. Dorrance's fence. There are trees above it. If he wants to do this, then he has to be a real neighbor and come over, talk to Kevin. Mr. Dorrance wants the trees cut, the limbs overhanging the campfire. Mr. Dorrance also would like it know that within eight to ten more feet there is his garage that houses a Harley, snowmobiles and flammable material. Mr. Dorrance wants to prevent a serious fire situation should anything catch on fire.

Chairman Wood asked Chief Pratt for further rules and regulations governing campfires be put on the back of the campfire permit or given out with the campfire permit.

Chairman Wood asking for any further public comment and hearing none summarizes the above. The general consensus is a weekly permit if possible. The Fire Department will keep the same hours, even though they have been considered inconvenient. However, a handout will be given with all permits stating the requirements and limitations for a campfire, i.e. height of flames, material that can be burned and a picture will show the dimensions of a proper campfire pit.

Chairman Wood asked Chief David Salois for his input on this issue. (cannot hear Chief Salois).

Chairman Wood asked Chief Pratt when the above can be accomplished. He stated it can be done this week and will have Rick Bates review it.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES OF JUNE 14, 2004 APPROVED 7-19-04

Chairman Wood will have it put on Channel 22 when it is completed. Town Manager Bates wants it known that the final decision is still Chief Pratt's. The Board of Selectmen is only a vehicle for getting the information out.

With no further comments, Chairman Wood moved on to the work session.

Selectmen Barnes brings up the issue of painting the Fire Station and it is decided they will take care of this issue now.

Chairman Wood reads into the record a memo from Dennis McCarthy (see attached). They will be painting the Old Fire Station the exact color the Library is. Painting will be starting in the next few weeks. No mural will be done as was suggested in the past. The Buildings and Maintenance Foreman is planning on removing the façade that is on the front, where the old sign was because it is all rotted and the birds are living in there. Removing that façade and putting up another façade that follows the roofline more and will look a little better from the front.

General consensus of the Board of Selectmen is that the painting of the Old Fire Station is fine, as long as it matches the library.

Chairman Wood would like to remind the citizens that there are tours of the Middle School at 7:10 p.m. on Tuesday, June 15, Thursday, June 17 and Wednesday, June 23rd.

Correspondence from Comcast citing changes in cable and new fees, so all Comcast customers please read your mailings carefully.

Chairman Wood turns the meeting over to Attorney Rob Ciandella.

Attorney Ciandella, Attorney for the Town of Raymond, spoke about New Hampshire Law as it relates to municipal charter/town charter. What are the choices in terms of forms of government and the process how you would go about getting a charter for the Town and the associated timelines. (See attached outline).

Correspondence

For the public's information, the first meeting of the New Merrimack Valley Water District has occurred and they will hold their first Board of Directors Meeting on Thursday, June 24th at 6:30 at 10 Meetinghouse Road in Bedford.

Motion to adjourn by Dick Wood, seconded by Jack Barnes. Motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50 p.m.