

Chairman Wood opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Other members present: Greg Bemis, Jack Barnes, Frank Bishop and Tim Auclair. Also present: Town Manager Rick Bates.

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

Chairman Wood read a proclamation to the Nor-Rock Senior Midget Football Team for their accomplishments this season.

Senator Barnes and Representative Bishop also presented a resolution from the NH State Senate and House of Representatives to the Nor-Rock Senior Midget Football Team.

Chairman Wood announced that the Cable Committee had installed the microphone system over the weekend and thanked them for their hard work.

Chairman Wood presented Seacoast News reporter Emily Quirk with a plaque for the work she has done covering the Town of Raymond.

### **Public Forum**

Tim Louis came before the Board and asked them to start putting the budget information on the town web site so that the people of the town are more informed. Selectman Auclair asked that it not be published until the Budget Committee has voted on it and is ready for the Deliberative Session. Selectman Bishop felt that it would be easier for citizens to get more involved in the budget process if they have access to the budget that is being worked on.

Mr. Bates stated that there have been two problems with putting the budget on the internet site. One was space and the other was making sure it was regularly updated. There is no longer a space issue with the website any more but there still is the issue of regularly updating the information.

Mr. Louis still felt that it would be a better help for the citizens to get involved.

Bette Patterson came forward and announced that she was a proud Army mom . She has two sons serving in the Army that had graduated from Raymond High School; one son in Iraq and another in North Korea. She stated that the Town Office had decided that instead of exchanging gifts this year they would send items to the Troops in Iraq. She invited other citizens to get involved. There will be a list posted in the Town Office or they can call and get some suggestions from the people in the office. If a citizen wants to get involved and doesn't have time they may donate money and someone will go shopping for items still needed or it can be used for shipping. Chairman Wood suggested calling Pease Air force Base and finding out if they have anything going that way. They may send it for free. Mrs. Patterson challenged the board to match a donation made by Al Witham. Selectman Barnes gave Mrs. Patterson \$51.00.

Nick Longo asked the Selectman to do something about the taxes. He moved to Raymond from Massachusetts because he was told that the Taxes were better. He thinks that the Selectmen should cut the budget so that the taxes do not go up anymore. He is looking into having a citizen petition to put a freeze on taxes, if that's legal. Selectman Barnes thanked him for coming and told him to go to the Budget Public Hearing. Selectman Bishop reminded him to look at the School Budget also. The Mr. Longo had noticed how high the school was and wanted to know if the Selectmen have any say in the School Budget. Selectman Barnes stated that they don't.

Frank Bourque came up and stated that the town has seen a 30% increase in the budget in the last six years. He doesn't believe that citizens should wait to get involved during the public hearings. He wants the Board to think of the older residents that have lived in town for many years but can no longer afford the taxes. Overall he is asking the Board to be level funded for the next couple of years so that the tax rate will not go up. He also asked that the budget be posted on the Town web site as changes are made so that citizens can see what is going on.

Selectman Auclair wanted to address a couple of things Mr. Bourque had mentioned. He asked where Mr. Bourque got the 30% figure. Mr. Bourque took the operating budget from the 2000 and compared it to the operating budget from 2006; there was a 30% increase. Selectman Auclair stated that the tax rate has not changed by 30%. He also stated that Mr. Bourque's numbers were incorrect. Mr. Bourque asked Selectman Auclair to look at the 2000 Town Report and see the difference.

Bob Carlburg cautioned the Board about conservation area and open space. He wanted the Board to be aware that if someone offers the Town open space land with a deed restriction the community has a chance to do something in later years. If the Town takes the land in perpetuity as a conservation subdivision, the land is no longer of use to the Town in any way. He believes that Conservation land should be a corridor not spots of land through out town. He cautioned that every property the town takes for Conservation, the Town is losing on the taxes from that property. Chairman Wood stated that history shows that land in conservation or green space is cheaper for the town than houses.

John Garrant came forward to the Board. He is the homeowner on Crowley Court that does the Christmas light display. He came before the Board because a neighbor of his has been complaining about the light display. He wanted to let the Board know that he collects donations for the VFW on certain nights. He has worked with the Police department about traffic issues and has had volunteers from the VFW help with the traffic. He wasn't sure what kind of action the Board was going to take if any. Chairman Wood stated that the Code Enforcement Officer has found that Mr. Garrant is in no way violating any codes in Raymond. Chairman Wood suggested having signs made so that people wouldn't go up the wrong street. Mr. Garrant stated that the signs were already in the works.

**Public Hearing to hear comments regarding the proposed ordinance change closing the Pine Grove Cemetery during the winter months. Second reading December 18, 2006**

Chairman Wood opened the public hearing to hear public comments regarding the proposed ordinance change closing the Pine Grove Cemetery during the winter months at 7:48 p.m.

Chairman Wood read the draft ordinance.

Chairman Wood invited public comment.

David Baker wanted to clarify that the Cemetery Advisory Board doesn't want to close the Cemetery from people visiting it in the winter months but wants to stop the winter burials and stop the plowing.

Cemetery Sexton Peter Harney wanted to apologize to the Board and the Citizens because he had been on vacation when all of this came up. He stated that the Cemetery Committee wanted to eliminate winter burials, not to close the cemeteries. He stated that the burials would probably stop December 1 and start April 1<sup>st</sup>. The Volt is capable of holding 12 caskets. He stated that he has never seen it with more than five at one time during his ten years as the Cemetery Sexton.

Selectman Barnes asked what the situation would be if someone of the Jewish faith were to pass away during the winter months of no burial. He is under the impression that people of the Jewish faith need to be buried before sundown. Mr. Harney stated that the decision would be up to the undertaker but they wouldn't be able to bury them in the cemetery. Selectman Barnes asked that John Bruitt come to the next public hearing so that he may answer some of these questions.

Mike Quintal stated that he sees more damage from the mowing of the grounds than plowing during the winter months. He stated that there is a liability to let people go into the cemetery with out maintaining the road. He also asked for an apology from Cemetery Advisory Board Member Mike Kapler for his commit he made last meeting this was discussed. He made a comment about telling citizens to put on their boots to go into the Cemetery to visit burial sites. He also asked the Selectmen to ask for Mr. Kaplers resignation from the Cemetery Advisory Board.

Mr. Kappler came forward and rebutted some of the comments Mr. Quintal had made.

Tim Louis stated that during the budget process it was said that it cost's the town \$1,000.00 to plow the cemetery during the winter time. Chairman Wood asked Dennis McCarthy, Public Works Director, if that was correct. Mr. McCarthy didn't have the amount with him. Mr. Louis suggested that the Town increase the selling price of the Cemetery Lots by \$50.00. Take that money and put it into a revolving trust fund that is used for the plowing and the maintenance of the cemeteries.

The Selectmen stated that no decisions would be made tonight. There would be a second hearing on December 18, 2006.

Selectman Bishop asked if a paragraph could be added to the ordinance so that people that have to be buried in the winter can petition the Board to do so. Chairman Wood stated that if the Town didn't plow and there was a burial then there would be more damage to the cemeteries. He suggested that the Board decide to plow constantly or not at all.

There was no other comment.

Chairman Wood closed the public hearing at 8:42 p.m. He announced that the second public hearing would be on December 18, 2006.

**Public Hearing- To hear comment regarding the proposed acceptance of a donation of 6.336 Acres of Open Space within the Madison Avenue Subdivision (Map 41, Lots 74 & 110) under the provisions of RSA 41-14-a**

Chairman Wood opened the public hearing to hear public comments regarding the proposed acceptance of a donation of 6.336 Acres of Open Space within the Madison Avenue Subdivision (Map 41, Lots 74 & 110) under the provisions of RSA 41-14-a at 8:18 p.m.

Chairman Wood invited public comment.

There was no public comment.

Chairman Wood closed the public hearing at 8:19 p.m. He announced that the second public hearing would be on December 18, 2006.

**Proposed changes to personnel policy**

Mr. Bates gave a brief history on this. Back in 2001 a policy committee was set up to make revisions to the personnel policy. That committee worked hard to make the policy the same to what is current practice. One issue was to have the non union benefits mimic the union benefits. The two main areas of concern were accumulation of vacation and sick time buyout provision. The union employees were accruing vacation time faster than non-union personnel. When this was initially developed the board created a warrant article to create a fund to pay for those two items but the personnel policy never changed.

Department Heads had been working on the policy so that it stays true to what was done years ago. To have money go into the fund set up by the warrant article there would be no Vacation buyback for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> week vacation. The selectmen had two versions of the personnel policy; the one in use and one that was worked on last week with the vacation buyback. The Department Heads modified the last version today to exclude

vacation buy out. It mimics the vacation schedule of the Teamsters contract and doesn't have a cap on vacation accrual.

Mr. Bates stated that the Board would be addressing the two most critical issues in the policy but there are also several more that need to be addressed.

Selectman Barnes wanted to make sure that the fund had been voted in by the citizens and that it is up to the Board how to implement it. Mr. Bates affirmed that. Selectman Auclair asked if the Town pays for disability insurance for the non union police officers. Police Chief David Salois stated that the Town offers it at the employee's expense. Selectman Auclair asked if the employees would like to see earned time rather than a split between vacation and sick. Library Director asked to speak. She told the Board that she would rather them deal with what is before them now than putting in another option that has not been considered by non union or union employees, Department Head or Town Manager.

**Selectman Barnes motioned to table this issue until the next meeting, December 11, 2006, and that it be the first item on the agenda, seconded by Selectman Bishop. No discussion. The motion passed four to one. Selectman Auclair opposed the motion.**

### **Default Budget**

Selectman Barnes read an excerpt from the material that Town Manager Rick Bates had put with the Selectmen packets. "The default budget is the responsibility of the Selectmen and the selectmen alone. The only provision in the law for the Budget Committee to have control of the default budget is with the passage of RSA 40:14(b) which has failed to pass twice. By law it is required to be posted along with the final budget and available for deliberative session. There is no requirement that it be part of the budget process and review by the budget committee or part of any public hearings other than deliberative session." Selectman Barnes wanted to know why the Board was doing the default budget tonight. Mr. Bates told him that the Budget Committee asked for it for their meeting tomorrow night. Selectman Barnes asked why the Board doesn't tell the Budget Committee no. He asked that the Board tell the Budget committee that they do not have a default budget ready yet and that it will be available when it is ready.

Mr. Bates told the Board that Grace Collette had put something together but it was in rough draft form because the Selectmen haven't had a chance to go over it yet. He suggested that the Board go to the Budget Committee with a default budget telling them that this is not the final version.

The Selectman decided to have Selectman Auclair bring the default budget in front of the Budget Committee with a "DRAFT" water mark behind it. No vote was taken on this.

### **Board of Selectmen Report**

Selectman Barnes announced that he had received a letter from a citizen. He read the letter. He asked the citizen who wrote the anonymous letter to come to a meeting and help the selectmen solve the problems mentioned in the letter.

Next Selectman Barnes discussed a letter in the Rockingham News about the Residency Requirement for the Town Manager. He read the letter. He wanted to remind the public that he was against not putting the residency requirement in the advertisement. He also apologized for not standing up at deliberative Session last year to voice his opinion on the Residency Requirement Petition Warrant Article. Don Jutton from MRI, the company doing the Town Manager search, had given the Board a copy of the ad that was on MRI's web site ([www.municipalresources.com](http://www.municipalresources.com)). The online ad did have the Residency Requirement in it. Selectman Barnes wanted Tina Thomas and the rest of the public know this.

Selectman Barnes talked to the Board about voter turn out. He found out that the Town of Raymond has the lowest voter turn out in the state. He was curious if the Supervisors of the Checklist ever purged their records and if so how was that done. He asked Town Manager Rick Bates to talk with Marilyn Semple, Supervisor of Checklist, and find out what happens.

Selectman Barnes announced that he and Selectman Bishop had set up an appointment for the Board and other board and committee members to meet with the Governor and the new DES Commissioner.

Selectman Barnes stated he went to the Budget Committee Meeting. He was asked to get in touch with the DOT Commissioner, Carol Murray, about the State Salt Shed on Route 27. He talked with her that afternoon. She told him to have the Town get in touch with her when the Town was ready to acquire the State Salt Shed. The Selectmen discussed leasing the property instead of having a warrant article to purchase the property. Mr. Bates stated he would get in touch with the Carol Murray.

Selectman Bishop stated he attended the Budget Committee meeting and a Highway Safety Committee Meeting. There were a couple of issues brought up at the Highway Safety Meeting he wanted to inform the Board about. One was the yield sign at Brown Road and Route 107. The committee voted to have Dennis McCarthy send the DOT Commissioner requesting a stop sign there rather than the yield sign. On Floral Ave the brush will be trimmed down for better visibility.

Selectman Auclair attended the Budget Committee meeting.

Selectman Bemis attended the Planning Board meeting. He wanted to let the Board know that the Selectmen's float for the Holiday Parade is underway.

Chairman Wood attended the Budget Committee and the Cable Committee. He thanked Jim Holmes, Ron Edgar and Marc Vadeboncoeur for putting in the ceiling lights in the media room.

**Town Manager Report**

Rick Bates told the Board that at the Department Head meeting this week a presentation was made on Reverse 9-1-1. Reverse 9-1-1 would call homes in a certain area of town or the whole town to let the residents know if there is an emergency situation happening such as the river flooding, road closure, etc. The program is fairly expensive. The Police Chief and Fire Chief are looking into grant money to purchase it.

He also attended a Business Relation Team meeting in Concord. At that meeting he was able to speak with Senator Sununu about the funding of the WWTP. The Senator gave Mr. Bates a contact person in his office to discuss getting additional help from the Federal government on funding. Selectman Barnes asked that after the swearing in of newly elected Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter, Mr. Bates contact her and invite her to the Town to discuss the development of Exit 4 and the WWTP.

Mr. Bates stated that another part of the meeting was that Northeastern University has been collecting data from businesses about what their motivating factor is to moving into communities. They developed a program so communities can do self evaluations to find out how the town is doing and what areas the town can improve on to be more marketable to businesses.

Mr. Bates attended ethics training in Hampton. It was a three state program from NH, ME, and VT.

MR. Bates also wanted to comment on how nice the lights downtown look.

**Selectman Bemis motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Selectman Bishop. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Chairman Wood adjourned the meeting at 10:03 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

April Rives  
Executive Secretary