

# Town of Hampton



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TOWN OF HAMPTON  
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MONDAY, MAY 04, 2009

PRESENT: Richard Griffin, Chairman  
Richard Nichols, Vice Chairman  
William Lally  
Richard Bateman  
Gerald Znoj  
Frederick Welch, Town Manager

7:00 PM Board of Selectmen Meeting

Chairman Griffin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and introduced the members of the Board.

## SALUTE TO THE FLAG

### I. Public Comment Period

Bonnie Searle, 16 Penniman Lane, here to mention an item under New Business in regards to changing the fiscal year. She has referenced the RSA's that outlines the process and she is worried for several reasons. One is that there are two ways to change one is by unanimous vote by the Board of Selectmen and the 2/3 vote by the Budget Committee or the other way is by Town Meeting vote. She would of course prefer the Town Meeting vote. Her main concern would be the 18-month transition period. She feels very strongly that if the Board does wish to go this way that they first hold a public hearing.

Mary Louise Woolsey, 148 Little River Rd, she would like to follow up on what Ms. Searle said and which she does agree with. She was surprised to see this on the agenda since it has not been discussed with the public since the election. She wonders if this is something that has been discussed behind the scenes.

Mr. Nichols pointed out that it is on the agenda for discussion and confirmed that it has not been discussed prior to tonight amongst the Board members.

Discussion on whether Ms. Woolsey was representing the Budget Committee.

Ms. Woolsey stated, as she always states when asked that question, that she is not speaking for the Committee, but she is speaking as the Chairman of the Budget Committee and will continue to do so until she is voted out.

Ms. Woolsey discussed the RSA's that are involved with the tax preparation and expressed concern with the fact that the residents would be faced with an 18-month tax bill. Ms. Woolsey cautioned the Board that this is a very hot potato and it would require a yes vote from all five members.

She thanked them for the time, and she reminded the Board although they may not like Mr. Bateman, he is not in the proper seat and should be seated in Mr. Lally's seat and reminded them that they are all passing through and she thinks the former Selectmen would like to see respect to them the former Selectmen.

Mike Pierce, 16 Hedman Ave, Mr. Pierce stated that he was not going to speak until Mary Louise caught his attention saying that she is the Chairman of the Budget Committee. That is correct, but nobody authorized her to speak on their behalf tonight. He is open to change and would like to see what benefits there might be in changing the fiscal year and that he will always be for change if it makes it better for the taxpayers. In regards to their seating arrangement, Mr. Pierce; and stating that he is speaking as a member of the committee and not for them; said that he would like to invite them all to come to a Budget Committee meeting and tell them all where to sit.

Linda Gebhart, 4 Bailey Ave, she comes as the President of the Coalition for a Fair Assessment. She has been receiving emails with questions that she has no answers too. She spoke with Mr. Estey earlier today and was informed that the abatements voted on tonight will be public record. She was also informed that there is an appeal process in Concord. She thanked the Board especially Mr. Nichols who has spent many hours working on these numbers. She also spoke about a possible revaluation in 2010 and hopes that there will be visits to each house. She encourages people with questions to visit the Assessing Department.

Ed MacDonald, 21-25 Epping Ave, still concerned with how the USPAP Report was put together. He is not sure why this report was presented to the Board in August of 2008 and not made available to the public until February.

Mr. Nichols commented that he was notified by Mr. Estey and Mr. Welch when the report was available and he believes that was around the 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> of January. He went down to the Assessing Department at this time and after seeing the report suggested to Mr. Welch that the report be put on the website, which was done within less than a week. Mr. Nichols is not sure about the August date and asked Mr. Estey to comment.

Mr. Estey is not sure about the August date either since the department did not start putting the report together until October or November.

Mr. MacDonald pointed out an August date on the transmittal page of the USPAP report. The only thing that Mr. Estey thinks that this date can be related to is when the report became available from the State. However, the report only contained generic information. Either way Mr. MacDonald does not feel that this report makes any sense or answers any of his questions.

## II. Announcements and Community Calendar

Mr. Znoj stated that it was a very nice ceremony that was held for the tennis courts last week.

Mr. Lally thanked the individuals who went down and cleaned up the beach this past week.

Mr. Bateman announced some of the different tennis camps that are available through the recreation department. He would also like to encourage anyone who might be able to help with providing a child with a scholarship in order to attend the camp to contact Ms. Martin.

Chairman Griffin announced that on Saturday night at 7 pm Dr. Jerry David, who is a retired History Professor from Dartmouth, will be presenting the program "A New England Town" at the Tuck Museum.

### III. Appointments

1. Fire Chief - Departmental Update – asked the Board to review the documents that he left for them. These documents included information in regards to the fire station study including the following items: update on fire station study explaining that RFQ's have gone out and RFP's will go out next, provided some research as to cost per square foot based on other projects in the State, create solid feasibility study, he hopes to get through feasibility, programming and schematic design phase with funds available, lastly he spoke about stimulus funds for fire stations and the different routes he is pursuing.

Discussion in regards to the information provided for the fire station study:

Mr. Nichols is impressed with the information that the Chief laid out in regards to the fire station study.

Mr. Lally wonders if the Town should send letters now, to the Federal Delegates in regards to the funds that are to become available for fire stations.

The Board agreed that this is a good idea.

Mr. Znoj verified that the money that has been allocated is going to be used on a study for the uptown station as well as the station at the beach.

Mr. Bateman commented that the Board had agreed at an earlier time that this project needed education and Chief Silver is providing this.

Chairman Griffin agreed with Mr. Bateman and feels that Chief Silver is taking the right approach by keeping the Board and residents informed. Chairman Griffin also wanted to make sure that the residents understand that the Board does not meet behind the scenes to discuss any of these items.

Mr. Znoj also commented on the fact that there is still not a site at the beach.

Chief Silver continued his report deviating from his normal format in order to have a more candid discussion and explain how the department runs.

The following items were discussed: number of discussions about budget, recognize that things need to change, started to look at how things are done and what can change, provided examples of some things that the private sector can do to cut costs but are not available in the field of emergency management, provided the Board with three analysis including one on overtime, response patterns, no way to really tell when an emergency is going to happen, gave some examples of simultaneous calls over the past 23 days, need for adequate staffing,

difference in demographics for the Town and the Beach District which requires staffing at different locations, explained the drop in overtime cost from 2007 to 2008 by hiring new fulltime firefighters, compared fire department staffing to that of a sports team and when someone goes on the disabled list they are replaced, solutions hire additional personnel or pay the overtime for those needed to cover open shifts, beginning tomorrow reducing coverage to 7 which is 2 below present level which will result in a delayed response, explained the emergency callback to cover ambulance transport and how the practice has not changed it is still 2 people who are called back, try a few different staffing and response times for the next couple of months, and lastly as Chief he can not recommend any of the budget cuts but will do what he can with what he is given.

Discussion:

Chairman Griffin asked how the department's response time compares to the past. Chief Silver explained that the response times are consistent with what they have been over the past several years.

Mr. Znoj thanked the Chief for the information and will review it.

Mr. Nichols explained that one thing that had concerned him was that the billings for the ambulance callbacks had only gone up by 7 or 8% and the overtime went up by 55%. After hearing what the Chief had to say, that this is because now we are essentially more prepared since more employees are responding to the callback. He recalls receiving calendarized workload information when he was on the budget committee showing large spikes in the summer months for both the police and fire. He thinks how the police handled this was with additional part time help, and is a good way to address this. He would urge the Chief to look at this and maybe do things differently in the winter months in regards to callbacks as opposed to the summer months. The other question he has is; could we be a one-station town if we did not have the traffic at the beach.

Chief Silver thinks that this would impact a number of other issues and explained that every minute counts when there is a fire. He explained that time, water and personnel to distribute the water are critical especially when you look at the ages of the buildings on the beach. He also explained their ISO ratings and how this would affect the insurances for the local businesses.

Mr. Lally also pointed out that that the beach station receives a number of walk-ins for first aid.

Chairman Griffin's stated that his comments mimic Mr. Nichols. He wonders if there was one larger station, would they be able to have the necessary staffing. Chief Silver expressed response time concerns again with only one station. Chairman Griffin wonders if the Chief has really looked into a location that could possibly work for both the beach and the Town. Chief Silver reiterated the need to have a Fire presence at the beach.

Mr. Znoj has some further thoughts and wonders about what else can be done. Some suggestions that he has are possibly seeking an outside ambulance service for when they are overextended on calls or some sort of volunteer firefighter services. Maybe look at how other Town's do things and not so much at how things have been done in the past.

Chief Silver questions what level of service someone wants for themselves.

Mr. Znoj said it is more about what level of service one can afford.

Chairman Griffin commented that the Board is going to have to take a good look at all the options since they are charged with doing what is right for the taxpayer.

2. Robert Estey – 2008 Abatements – Mr. Estey presented the Board with 231 abatements to be signed numbers 1001 to 1231 totaling \$122,556.64.

Mr. Nichols commented that there were a lot of people who were upset with their tax increase. He explained that the Town has not done a whole fiscal inspection in over 20 years.

Mr. Nichols reiterated what Mr. Estey had pointed out, that there were 231 abatement request which equates to about 2 ½% of the total properties. That compares to less than 70 in 2003 with a rising market and in 1989 there were 1250 and one year later, there were 850, at which time there was a depreciating market. The Assessor approved 122 of the abatement request and 109 were denied. The median amount was \$356.

During the course of his review, Mr. Nichols concluded that the Board of Selectmen should avoid changing the Assessors recommendations on specific properties. He believes that Selectmen level overrides would politicize the process leading to more problems. Property Owners that are dissatisfied with the Assessor's decision can seek recourse in Land Court or Superior Court. Mr. Nichols did meet with Mr. Estey last week to go over questions that he had on some of the properties.

In most cases, Mr. Estey was able to clarify his decision to Mr. Nichols satisfaction and in other cases, they agreed to disagree. Due to the dynamics of the real estate market Mr. Nichols does believe that the Town needs to do another revaluation process before 2013 but preferably in 2010 if that is achievable.

Mr. Nichols would like Mr. Estey to respond to Mr. MacDonald question about the 10% land reduction resulting in bringing us from 5% over on residential properties down to 99 to 100% and how this did not apply to condos.

Mr. Estey explained that in past years when updates were done he had a certified assessor that used to do the condos and he would do the land and buildings. Mr. Estey continues to work on land and buildings and the condos are done by his assistant.

Mr. Estey went on to explain the complicated process that he used when performing his valuation on these properties and how in April when the home prices began to drop he went back and made the 10% adjustment to the land value. He also reminded the public that the economy did not really tank until July at which time it was too late to make any changes. He also explained in detail how condos do not contain the same land value as other properties and the valuation of condos is based on recent sales of other condos in the same complex. Mr. Estey also pointed out that in the past the Town has voted down having a company come in and do a revaluation so Mr. Estey has in turn stepped up and done the job. In the end the 10% reduction that was made to the land value did not apply to condos.

Discussion

Mr. Nichols added that this is a very complicated subject and he does understand what Mr. Estey said. He thinks that anyone who owns a condo knows that the valuation is based on recent sales of other condos in the complex.

Mr. Bateman thinks that the explanation makes sense and he does believe that you need a true professional in the field to do this job.

Mr. Lally reminded the public as to how Mr. Nichols became the point man for the Board of Selectmen to look into the tax increases and to try to make sense of the whole thing. Mr. Lally would like to thank Mr. Nichols for taking this on and keeping the Board up to date. He pointed out once again, that 5 years between revaluations is too long and he feels it should be done every 2 to 3 years.

Mr. Znoj explained that he put in some hours as well looking at Mr. Estey's work and trying to figure things out. He agrees that it becomes a very complicated subject. He will accept the report and reminded each homeowner that there are opportunities to appeal.

Chairman Griffin agrees with Mr. Nichols that there needs to be a revaluation in 2010.

Mr. Lally MOTIONED to sign the 2008 Abatements. Mr. Bateman SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

#### IV. Minutes of April 27, 2009

Mr. Bateman MOTIONED to approve the minutes of April 27, 2009 as submitted. Mr. Lally SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

#### V. Town Manager's Report

I am pleased to announce the appointment of two new Firefighters to fill two existing vacancies. Dean P. Tsonas was appointed on April 21<sup>st</sup> and David A. Marcotte, II was appointed April 25<sup>th</sup>.

For those who wish to be kept up to date on the developments in the Swine Flu, please see the State Department of Health and Human Services website at [www.dhhs.nh.gov](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov) for the latest information. Fact Sheets are available at the Town Offices and or can be obtained at the Building and Health Department.

The Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day is this Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 12 noon behind the Old Town Hall.

If you are interested in ordering a rain barrel from the Conservation Commission, please do as soon as possible. Order early as the delivery date is May 30<sup>th</sup>. For more information or to order you can call the Commission at 929-5808 or Jay Diener at 929-6325.

If you have not licensed your dog, please do so as soon as possible. The licensing date was April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion – No questions from the Board

## VI. Old Business

Mr. Znoj asked about a trash ordinance at the Beach for businesses and wonders if there is one in place. Mr. Welch said that he is waiting for direction from the Board. He warns them to make sure that they are serious before they do this, since if it is enforced there will be monetary consequences for the businesses.

Mr. Bateman pointed out that there are business owners down on the beach that uses the State trash receptacles, which are for public use to dump their businesses trash that should be going out the back door.

Mr. Lally and Mr. Nichols pointed out that the business owners from the beach have been invited to the Selectmen's meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup> at which time the Board can address these problems.

Mr. Bateman wonders what the capacity is for Waste Management to bring in large plastic containers on wheels for the business owners on the beach. Mr. Welch explained that the Town has the capacity to do this themselves and the cost for a 65-gallon container was \$45 and the cost for a 95-gallon container was \$55.

Mr. Znoj asked about the Bridge issue.

Mr. Welch discussed that the State did authorize the use of police details, now that the Bridge work is done for this season. The previous agreement was voided by the State and the Town should renegotiate the agreement for the next seasons work. There should be a coordinated effort made between the State of New Hampshire, State of Massachusetts and the Town, for details to control the traffic in the coming work periods. At the moment, the State is not willing to work with us on this but he believes that will change soon.

Chief Sullivan explained it is his understanding in speaking with the State Project Manager on the reconstruction of the Bridge, the Bridge is expected to be open for two-way traffic on Wednesday May 13<sup>th</sup>. However, additional repair work on the Bridge will continue and it is expected that there will be daily lane closures during the work period.

Chairman Griffin stated that is good news.

Mr. Znoj asked if a meeting has been set up with DRED to discuss the dog waste on the Beach.

Mr. Welch stated that May 18<sup>th</sup> is a schedule date to discuss the resolution to this problem.

Chairman Griffin would like to bring up the discussion on the rent of the Beach Fire Station and the amount requested by the Beach Village Precinct Commissioners, and the discussion that should take place on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Welch commented that the Beach Village Precinct Commissioners would like to have some sort of proposal on the table when they come.

Chairman Griffin feels that the Board needs to wait until the Commissioners are here before having this discussion. He also does not feel that we should send out the lawyers to discuss this that it needs to be discussed in the open for the public to hear.

Mr. Nichols stated that the Board was given legal advice that gives the authority to shift monies from other operating accounts in the amount of \$20,000.00 to be used towards the study for the fire station at the Beach.

Mr. Nichols MOTIONED to make a proposal to the Beach Village Precinct Commissioners to use \$20,000 for a study at the beach in regards to a new fire station. Chairman Griffin SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

## VII. New Business

1. Budget Cuts – Mr. Welch explained that the budget has been cut by \$450,000 and the Board has been presented with the documents, which identify the budget cuts.

Please keep in mind, the Boards prior decision to have the tax rate set at \$6.50 per \$1,000. Mr. Welch explained how the adjustments show up and how they will be held on a holding line. The request is in accordance with the schedule provided, and that the cuts be authorized, and also requests the Board to authorize a transfer from these individual budget lines to the holding account.

Mr. Welch also requests that the Board authorize that that \$450,000 be transferred at the time that tax rate is set from the unreserved and designated fund balance, to the tax rate computation; this would be to offset the sum so that at the end of the year the \$450,000 falls back and is still there in the fund balance. The \$20,000 for the fire station is in there and Mr. Welch continues to look at the departmental budgets, and what the legislature is doing and how it effect the Town's Budget, and hopefully, will be prepared to identify the areas in the budget that may possible be cut.

Finance Director Michael Schwotzer added that the reason for the reduction of the unreserved fund balance is that when a budget is passed, that budget number literally sets the expenses at the tax rate time. Therefore, it needs to be offset if we do not spend the \$450,000, so it would not affect the number going in as expenses for the tax rate setting.

Mr. Znoj feels that there are many accounts that have not been touched and should have been touched. These accounts are across all the departments. He feels that this should be delayed a week so that he can have an opportunity to sit down with the Finance Director and Mr. Welch.

Mr. Lally is ok with the proposal, the Town Manager asked for \$450,000 in cuts and that is what the departments provided.

Mr. Bateman asked if the lights could be shut off.

Mr. Welch explained that the he was looking into what streetlights could be turned off to enable the Town to turn on the lights at the Ashworth Avenue Parking Lot. Mr. Welch confirmed that the only way to turn on the lights at the Ashworth Ave Lot would be to cut lights from somewhere else.

Mr. Welch pointed out that the Department Heads are here for a reason and that is they are not recommending these cuts, they were told to make the cuts, and to make the cuts from the basis of which would be the least cumbersome and the most effective way to maintain the departments operations.

Chairman Griffin asked if the lights on Ocean Blvd are paid by the State. Mr. Welch answered that some are paid by the State and some by the Town. The Town does have a list of all the streetlights that belong to the Town.

Mr. Nichols made the following comments: the 450,000.00 will be eaten up just by revenue shortfalls at the Town level, \$85,000 shortfall for NHRS. Recommendations include TAN interest is still at \$80,000 which is high, reasonable to reduce some of the gasoline and heating fuel, pleased to see no layoffs, disappointed with reductions in overtime, not sure why cuts need to be made in regards to the Seafood Festival as that is a public event and the costs should be borne by the Chamber and the Town should not be subsidizing it and that does not mean to impede public safety.

Chairman Griffin interjected and stated that the Fire Chief was here and he

Would like to ask Chief Silver about the fireworks at the beach and what has been done in the past and what is planned for the future.

Chief Silver explained that the three groups being discussed are Seafood Festival, Fireworks and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. He agrees that the Seafood Festival is a private event so does not fall into the same category as the other two events. There will need to be a discussion with the Chamber in regards to the Seafood Festival. In regards to fireworks, this will need to be discussed with the Precinct. In 2005, the Board took the position that the Town would absorb the cost of coverage for the fireworks.

Chief Silver pointed out that \$8,500 has already been cut from his budget in regards to the firework details and he would have cut from another place to cover the fireworks. He has cut everywhere he felt was appropriate.

The Board asked of Mr. Welch where else cuts can be made, he responded commercial trash pick-up would be one area for cost savings.

The Board all agreed that they would like to uphold the decision made by the Board in 2005 and will continue to absorb the cost related to firework coverage.

Mr. Nichols would like reiterate what he had said. He spoke about HB223 and HB641, at some point we are going to have new contracts and will be hit with spiking charges, the overtime is the big problem, and the lighting in Ashworth Ave Lot is important and lastly he thinks that we should learn from a lot of the criticisms that the School Board faced and that we need to take one more pass at the cuts. The public now knows what cuts are proposed and will be able to comment on them at the public comment period next week.

The Board agreed that they would like to table the budget cuts until next week.

Mr. Schwotzer asked for clarification as to whether the Board would like to see more cuts or just a redistribution of where the current amount is being cut from.

Mr. Nichols would like to see \$70,000 from the TAN line and an exercise from the fuel accounts.

Mr. Schwotzer responded that every dollar that is moved into the holding account is a dollar that cannot be spent. The cut were reasonably made and does not feel that he has the right to make further cuts to any one department's budget.

Mr. Znoj disagrees and that they are the taxpayer's representatives and everything opportunity should be identified. He feels that he should look at the 2008 actuals and the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2009 to see where cuts can be made.

Mr. Bateman expressed concerns with asking the Department Heads to take another week out of their schedules to make these changes and the possible negative impact it can have on the operations of their departments.

Mr. Lally agrees with Mr. Schwotzer that it is the department heads' budget and that they know better than anyone where the cuts could be made and he would leave it in their capable hands.

Chairman Griffin pointed out that in many ways we have to cut back on things that were done by the Town in the past and that we are going to be faced with making some difficult choices.

Mr. Nichols agrees with Mr. Schwotzer from the standpoint that the department heads are the best ones to put together their own budget. Having said that he cannot go along with a situation where we are saying that we are not going to provide coverage for fireworks knowing that there is plenty of excess money sitting in gasoline accounts.

Chairman Griffin stated that we will discuss this again next week and thanked the Department Head for coming this evening.

1. Act authorizing the Town of Hampton to change the Fiscal Year

Chairman Griffin commented that contrary to what was said earlier tonight, the Board is discussing this for the first time at this time. And that he did think that Ms. Searle had some good ideas.

Chairman Griffin also stated that he does not feel it is right for an individual during the public comment portion to use the comment period to attack the Board, as it was done tonight. That that was counterproductive.

Mr. Lally also added that he may not have been around as long as some individuals, but he feels that there is no need for the Board to be attacked. The Town hired a manger to manage the town and to improve the Town. His job is to bring new ideas to the Selectmen. He went on to explain that there were many times when he was Chairman in his discussions with Mr. Welch, many ideas would be bought up for potential discussion amongst the Board. Then those ideas would appear on the agenda for the Board to discuss in an open forum. This happens to be one of those times and he has no idea why Mr. Welch thinks this is a good idea but he looks forward to hearing what it is all about.

Chairman Griffin did add that his initial comment was incorrect and that he had seen the item and that it was under "New Business" and now was being discussed with the Board.

Mr. Welch explained how the fiscal operation works in the Town. Currently has their Town Meeting in March, which means appropriations become effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, and which is the time that the Town that is also beginning their tax assessment year. What happens is that for the first three months of the year the Town spends 1/12<sup>th</sup> of the previous year's appropriations because there is no authority to spend anything. With this proposed change the money would be spent after it is appropriated, which is the correct way to spend the appropriated money. In

order to do this you must change the fiscal year. The ways to do this are as follows: you have the authority to appropriate for a twelve-month period unless you accept an alternate law that lets you appropriate for two years. Since the Town is on a twelve-month period currently then we would be allowed to make appropriations for an eighteen-month period. The two ways you can do this is to have 12 ½ million dollars in cash or we have to bond 12 ½ million dollars. Having The proposal is, if the Board is interested is this, that the Board place an article on the warrant for the annual town meeting, which would allow the Town to vote on this home rule legislation which and if approved would then go before the general court. If it is approved in the General Court, it would then come back to the Town and be placed on the ballot for the next general or state election.

What would the Town want to do this? Contrary to the fear that most people have, it would really not do much of anything. The law is very specific. All we are talking about here is legislation that would allow us to break it up into three billing periods instead of two. The tax bill would not be more in the aggregative.

The objective is to simply change the accounting so that we are in sync with the school, the county and the State. We would also be spending the money after it is collected which decreases the possibility of borrowing more money.

Mr. Welch explained that two changes will occur when there is a change in the fiscal year. The first change is the fiscal year to July 1 and also to change the change the town meeting time and that should also be discussed by the Board.

The reason for changing the town meeting time is a little more political than financial. We have wrestled this year with what the legislature will be doing with the anti-spiking bill at the end of their fiscal year, June 30<sup>th</sup>. For example had we had the deliberative session in April for a May town meeting, we would have had the spiking charge amount of \$650,000 removed from the March vote. We were lucky this year that the legislation allowed us to take this out and not have it impact the tax rate. By having the town meeting, later in the year it will allow us to see more of what is going to happen in the legislature and how it would affect our finances. It is strictly an accounting operation method that allows us not to spend the money until we actually have it. He thinks this is more of a conservative financial approach then they currently have. We are always six-months behind the State and the Schools and we have to borrow the money to stay afloat, or float bonds, fortunately, we are able to do that for now.

#### Discussion

Chairman Griffin asked for clarification as to whether or not this proposal would have to be voted on.

Mr. Welch confirmed that yes it would have to appear on the warrant at town meeting. Public Hearings would also occur not only here but also at the State level.

Mr. Welch also explained that they have looked at how other Town's have done this and have changed some of the verbiage. This has been run by the legal and finance departments and changes were made so that the Town would not run into some of the same problems other communities have.

Chairman Griffin questioned if this would save the taxpayer's money. Mr. Welch said that it could and it is a way to definitely simplify things.

Mr. Schwotzer confirmed that, we would just have to prepare a budget for an eighteen-month period and collect taxes three times. The transition would be simple. He feels the biggest thing here is to get more in line with the State Legislature. Since this is the biggest hurdle, we have had this year.

Mr. Lally pointed out that we also lost out on some stimulus money that was available after March by holding the town meeting in March.

Mr. Znoj added with the state cutting back on the retirement funds and meals and sales tax is going to come up again this is a very dynamic situation.

Chairman Griffin wonders if we can tie doing both the town meeting and changing the fiscal year all at the same time in this discussion. Mr. Welch believes that it can be discussed together but it would have to be two separate warrant articles.

Mr. Lally feels that by having town meeting in May, you are going to get more people out to vote including the elderly and people from the beach.

Mr. Nichols suggested that this information be posted on the website that outlines objectives, process for achieving objective and then a FAQ section. After having this on the website for a while then have a public hearing.

Chairman Griffin announced that there is a consensus to move forward with this and prepare some information for the public to review before holding a public hearing.

Mr. Bateman complimented the manager on bringing forward a worthy topic for discussion.

Mr. Nichols went back to the beginning and thinks that it is good for the public to come in and question things and the Board should not take it personally.

Mr. Znoj thinks that it is important that the information is clear and bulleted for the public. It should include what the motivation was which includes the schools and the State. He thinks that it is open for discussion and he is still very interested.

Chairman Griffin added that the paramount thing that the Board wants to do is keep things as transparent as possible and that is what they are doing. And, thank Mr. Welch for bring ideas to the Board.

#### VIII. Consent Agenda

1. Supplement Loan Agreement – Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements
2. High Street Cemetery - Conti, Principato, Skinner and Carroll
3. Lane Library Trustee Alternate Appointment – Robert Frese
4. Hawkers, Peddlers and Itinerant Vendors License – Gerald Sterritt dba North East Ice Cream

Mr. Bateman MOTIONED to move the Consent Agenda. Mr. Lally SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

IX. Closing Comments

Mr. Nichols thinks that this was a very productive meeting. All the Board members agreed.

Mr. Bateman thanked Mr. Nichols for stepping forward with respect to the abatement. With his experience with numbers and all the work that was involved it is very much appreciated.

Mr. MacDonald was allowed a very short time to comment. Mr. MacDonald wanted to state that the specific requirement of the USPAP report was to enable the property owners to understand how the property appraisals were set and that the report does not do that. And to the reference of Mr. Estey, Mr. Estey had commented that condos have separate land ownership and that is not correct. In every condo document that is registered at the Registry of Deeds it is stated that each condo has interest in the common land as a percentage of what each condo owner owns in the land and they are assessed on that value. On a positive note, he added if we get the lights in the Ashworth Ave lot, we then can extinguish every other light on Highland Ave.

Chairman Griffin would like to comment that this Board does not intend to do things necessarily the same way as other Boards have done in the past. In addition, he does not think that there is anything holding their noses' to do things as previously done. Moreover, they do not have to sit in certain seats even though Mary Louise got three people to jump all over him on that. They have made their decision to sit where they want and these seats are comfortable.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Lally MOTIONED to adjourn. Mr. Bateman SECONDED.

Meeting adjourned at 9:54 PM

VOTE: 5-0-0



Chairman