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PRESENT: S. C. Volpone, Jr., T. C. Tocci, S. C. Hanson, Selectmen; E. N. Small, Town Administrator; M. L. Garavaglia, Secretary

S. C. Volpone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

• OLD BUSINESS

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES (DEC 19 & 27; JAN. 2, 16, 23 & 28): These minutes will be addressed at the Board's next meeting when L. A. Ruest is present.

FINANCIAL REPORTS-GENERAL FUND BALANCE - JAN. 29 - \$1,179,000

ACTION ITEMS OF DEC 19 & 27: E. N. Small included an updated Action Item List in the Selectmen's packets. T. C. Tocci asked whether the task of refinishing the wooden floor should be added to the AI List. E. N. Small said he would look into this.

TOWN'S DELIBERATIVE SESSION – LAS GYM – FEB. 9TH, 9 A.M.: John Shaw will moderate this session and refreshments will be provided by Barbara Dykeman.

WORKSHOP IN PREPARATION FOR DELIBERATIVE SESSION: This will be conducted immediately after the Selectmen's meeting rather than Thursday morning as originally scheduled.

REPORT ON PROGRESS OF THE TOWN REPORT: E. N. Small reported that work was progressing, although there were still items that needed to be completed.

CONGRESSIONAL REPORTS: E. N. Small stated the Carol Shea Porter had requested that the Congressional Report be included in the Town's Annual Report. He feels that it is not appropriate at this time, and the Board agreed.

DEPUTY TAX COLLECTOR'S POSITION: Only three applications have been received and the deadline for application has been extended to February 16, 2008. "Help Wanted" announcements have been posted throughout town; Mr. Tim Samway suggested that the job be advertised as "Position Available." The TA will consider this change.

CUSTODIAN FOR THE TOWN HALL: Robert Regan has applied for this position; consensus is that he is well qualified for the job.

MOTION: To hire Mr. Regan for the position as custodian on a six-month probationary basis.

MOTION: T. C. Tocci
SECOND: S. C. Hanson
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SECURITY AT THE BRUSH DUMP: Eugene Keller met with E. N. Small and Chief Dirsas; he was asked to address the security issue at the dump and to recommend a solution.

OTHER: T. C. Tocci questioned whether there were any other issues regarding the Deliberative Session that required discussion; E. N. Small stated that all considerations had been addressed. S. C. Hanson asked what resulted from the meeting between the snow plowing contractor and department heads; E. N. Small reported that the consensus was that plowing needs to start earlier, and that Richard Merrill, Jr.—the Town’s Road Agent—will oversee the snow plowing.

· NEW BUSINESS

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES 2008: E. N. Small included the meeting schedule for this year in the packets. T. C. Tocci asked when S. C. Hanson thought the Energy Committee would be meeting; S. C. Hanson was unsure of the date, but projected that it would be an evening meeting. Three residents have expressed an interest so far in joining this committee.

NHLGC REGIONAL DINNER: T. C. Tocci questioned whether the March 25, 2008 date would pose a conflict for the Selectmen with the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant drill. Jay Lord replied that inasmuch as the Board of Selectmen had participated in similar drills and was aware of the procedure, that it would not be necessary for them to attend.

LAND USE CHANGE TAX: E. N. Small reported that \$25,000 has been collected in LUCT since the beginning of the year; 15% of this will be deposited into the Conservation Commission’s Capital Fund. Additionally, a property tax abatement request for \$1,113 was authorized by the Selectmen.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE ADMINISTRATION: Jeanne Samms will continue as Municipal Services Division Auditor for the Town in 2008.

NH RETIREMENT SYSTEM LEGAL FUND:

MOTION: To contribute \$229.25 to this fund for the purpose of participating in the litigation relative to increasing retirement costs.

MOTION: S. C. Hanson

SECOND: T. C. Tocci

UNANIMOUS

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL CONTRACT: E. N. Small reported that our current contractor will not continue collecting waste beyond the first of April (the contractor has decided to go out of business); E. N. Small has prepared a RFP and asked the Selectmen (along with Michael Hastings) to review this proposal as soon as possible. E. N. Small

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made note of the new Section 3.2 on page seven. Pending approval of this document, he will forward it to five or six bidders.

NORTHEAST RESOURCES RECOVERY ASSN. 2007 REPORT: E.N. Small made note of this report which stated that the Town recycled 19 tons of scrap metal last year.

OTHER: Chris Merrill asked questions of the Board regarding the relationship of Billy Shaw to any Town employees or volunteers; the erecting of signs; the cost to collect brush; and asked S. C. Volpone from whom the Town's snowplowing contractor had purchased his trucks. S. C. Volpone responded to these questions and advised C. Merrill that the department heads would be in attendance at the next Selectmen's meeting should he want additional information.

This concluded the discussion of Old and New Business.

STATE CERTIFICATION PROCESS: Diana Calder, Town Assessor, reported that the Assessing Boards have mandated that town's must certify their assessments every five years; Hampton Falls completed this process in 2003 and will need to repeat this procedure in 2008. The Certification Process (CP) requires that assessment values fall within 90 -110% of market values; Hampton Falls is currently at 81% of market value, with a standard deviation of 10 (the CP stipulates a standard deviation of 20 or less). Ms. Calder stated that the process is not optional and will likely increase the average assessment by 15%; she will notify property owners in July with their new appraisal valuations. T. C. Tocci asked how the new Vision software impacted this procedure. Ms. Calder replied that it is a more stable platform and allows the Town to be more efficient in terms of statistical studies. Michael Farinola questioned whether a blanket reevaluation could be utilized; Ms. Calder stated that not all land values are equal but that new models would be developed to eliminate the need for door-to-door visits.

S. C. Volpone opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING—ACCEPTANCE OF UNANTICIPATED FUNDS—PUBLIC SAFETY GRANTS: S. C. Volpone read the document authorizing the Selectmen to accept this money from the Federal government as regulated by RSA 31:95-b as long as certain criteria were satisfied. Jay Lord, Fire Chief, explained that the Town conducted a mass casualty drill in June at a cost of approximately \$21,800 and that these funds were provided by the State to offset this expense. C. Merrill questioned whether the Town conducted a public hearing to approve the cost to conduct this drill; Mr. Lord responded that he was required to submit a proposal to the State which was reviewed, approved, and the reimbursement authorized.

MOTION: To accept \$30,000 for the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program and \$6,500 for the FY06 Emergency Management Performance Grant.

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MOTION: T. C. Tocci
SECOND: S. C. Hanson
UNANIMOUS

S. C. Volpone closed the Public Hearing at 7:12 p.m.

SENATOR MARTHA FULLER CLARK—LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: Ms. Clark discussed the efforts to find a site for the new Exeter-Hampton Courthouse, outlining the challenges with land cost and water and sewer issues; the most viable location to date is off Liberty Lane in Hampton. When asked how the Selectmen could help, Ms. Clark replied that a letter to the Legislative Board, supporting the Liberty Lane site, would be most helpful. Funding was discussed, and Mr. Tim Samway questioned whether the Department Of Transportation could lease land; Ms. Clark said she would investigate this option. She then asked the Selectmen for their input on areas of concern, and the following were discussed:

Donor (vs. Receiver) Towns: Ms. Clark will email the website address with current information on this matter. The funding formula will not be calculated this year; this could result in a state-wide property tax.

Special Needs Impact: This places a heavy financial burden on the Town's taxpayers, particularly as there is no significant commercial base to help offset these costs. Because this is a Federal mandate, however, states are limited in their ability to address this. Ms. Clark recommends forming a commission to investigate action that can be taken at the local level.

County Contribution: T. C. Tocci questioned the level and types of services that the County is providing for the money they receive; Ms. Clark said that much of it goes to support nursing homes.

General Retirement Fund: S. C. Volpone asked why the State has a defined benefit rather than a defined contribution plan; Ms. Clark will investigate and get back to the Selectmen. For now, the benefit is fixed by law, but perhaps this can be changed in the future. Many issues are involved: COLA, medical benefits, etc.

Transportation Costs: T. C. Tocci reported that there has been a reduction in the Federal contribution for transportation funding, yet the gas tax has not increased since 1992; he asked her position on this issue. Ms. Clark stated that she favors an increase in the gas tax and that the current problem with the allocation of this tax revenue must be corrected so that it is used specifically for road and bridge repair. She said that the increase in tolls has been helpful, and that a committee will be looking into expanding the rail line from Newburyport to Portsmouth.

Energy Programs: S. C. Hanson asked whether there was support for alternative energy programs. Ms. Fuller replied that a regional greenhouse gas program will be developed that will save rate payers money by 2018. Also, initiatives to encourage energy

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conservation will be augmented. Lastly, a 25 x 25 plan was approved in 2007. This specifies that by 2025, 25% of the energy consumed must come from renewable sources. S. C. Hanson questioned why non-profit agencies were charged at the commercial rate and suggested that a rate be established for these organizations. Ms. Clark thought that this was an interesting idea that should be considered.

Ms. Clark complimented the Selectmen on their insight into the issues and on the questions that they raised. Ms. Clark thanked them for their time; she offered to return in May and on a regular basis.

MOTION: To conclude the public session at 8:20 p.m. and go into private session.

MOTION: T. C. Tocci
SECOND: S. C. Volpone
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