

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

MARCH 3, 2008

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hampden Town Council was held on Monday, March 3, 2008. The meeting was held at the municipal building council chambers and was called to order by Mayor Briggs at 7:07 p.m.

Attendance: Councilors: Mayor Rick Briggs, Thomas Brann, Andrew Colford, Matthew Arnett, Shannon Cox and Andre Cushing. Edward Murphy was excused.

Town Manager: Susan Lessard

Town Counsel: Thomas Russell

Department Heads/Staff: Public Works Director Chip Swan, Library Director Debbie Lozito and Public Safety Director Joe Rogers

A member of the press and citizens

Mayor Briggs informed the Council that Councilor Murphy was ill and had requested an excused absence. Councilor Cushing so moved, seconded by Councilor Arnett – unanimous vote in favor.

A. CONSENT AGENDA

Treasurer's Warrants were circulated for approval and signatures of the Finance Committee. The balance of the Consent Agenda was accepted without objection.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jim Feverston, Treasurer of the Lura Hoit Pool Board of Trustees reminded everyone that the spaghetti supper and silent/live auction to benefit the Lura Hoit Pool Susan G. Abraham Endowed Memorial Scholarship will be held Saturday, March 8, 2008 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm at Hampden Highlands United Methodist Church.

C. POLICY AGENDA

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

2. NOMINATIONS-APPOINTMENTS-ELECTIONS

There were none.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. BID RESULTS – AIR CONDITIONING FOR LIBRARY

Library Director Debbie Lozito informed the Council that all the bids came in higher than expected and there is a shortfall of approximately \$3700. Manager Lessard explained that the bid from the low bidder R J Morin was renegotiated and reduced down to \$46,000. Manager Lessard said the Library Reserve fund will have a balance of \$43,000 at year-end and the Edythe Dyer Library Friends group has approximately \$400, the Library book sale an additional \$500, bottle donations of \$500 and library patrons have donated \$455.50 toward the project, leaving a shortfall of approximately \$2000.

Councilors Arnett and Cox would like to see a needs assessment come from the Library Board of Trustees before the upcoming budget and look at the whole picture with the air conditioning being a component of that. Debbie informed the Council that the Trustees are currently doing that and she will request that it be completed by the end of April. Mayor Briggs and Councilor Colford expressed concern about draining the reserve account.

Councilor Brann moved and Councilor Cox seconded to authorize the purchase and installation of the air conditioning system at the Edythe Dyer Library and award the bid to R.J. Morin Co. using funds as previously allocated with remaining funds to come from anticipated fund balance.

Although the bids are good for only 30 days after they were opened on February 15th, Councilor Arnett stated that he would rather wait for the needs assessment from the Library Trustees. He moved to table this until the next Council meeting on March 17th. The motion died for lack of a second.

By roll call, vote on the original motion was 4 in favor and 2 opposed (Arnett and Briggs) – motion carried.

b. TRANSFER STATION PROPOSAL

In Councilor Murphy's absence, Manager Lessard reported that the Public Works & Solid Waste Committee met on February 21st to discuss problems with transfer station operation. The recommendation from the committee is that household trash, recyclables and swap shop disposal continues with Wednesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday/Sunday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. schedule year round. All other waste disposal, including metal, appliances,

wood and construction & demolition debris, shingles, computer monitors, and televisions shall be accepted the second and fourth weekends of each month, both Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Additionally the Committee recommended a \$15 fee for disposal of any appliance with a refrigerant that must be removed. The fee would be paid at the Town Office and a sticker would be issued to place on the appliance at the time of disposal. On weekends that non-household trash is accepted there will be staffing at the gate to check for stickers prior to entrance and sufficient staff on hand to handle acceptance of all materials. Manager Lessard and Public Works Director Chip Swan recommend implementation of this policy beginning in May in order for appropriate notice to be sent to all transfer station users. Finally, the Committee recommends that the Town Office staff continue to follow the guidelines currently in place for issuing stickers.

Chip informed the Council that he would need to hire a part-time person to run the compactors and plans to use the services of a security company at \$16/hour in order to have someone at the gate to check stickers on the weekends that non-household trash is accepted. He plans to move the entrance of the transfer station to make it longer so there will be room to turn away people who don't have adequate stickers before entering.

Motion by Councilor Cushing, seconded by Councilor Colford to accept the Committee recommendation to charge a \$15.00 fee to pay for the disposal of any appliance with a refrigerant and require a sticker to be obtained from the Town Office and placed on that appliance prior to disposal – unanimous vote in favor.

Motion by Councilor Cushing, seconded by Councilor Arnett to reiterate the procedure now in place to require residents to acquire a permit to use the transfer station and continue to require presentation of a vehicle registration and appropriate identification to receive a sticker.

Following discussion as to whether the verbiage of the motion was correct, Councilor Cushing withdrew his motion.

Motion by Councilor Brann, seconded by Councilor Arnett to reaffirm the existing policy for issuance of transfer station decals – unanimous vote in favor.

Motion by Councilor Cushing, seconded by Councilor Arnett that all other waste disposal outside of household trash, recyclables and swap shop, including metal, appliances, wood, construction and demolition debris, shingles, computer monitors and televisions shall be accepted the second and fourth weekends of each month from 8 am to 4 pm beginning the second weekend of May. By roll call, vote was 5 in favor and 1 opposed (Colford) – motion carried.

It was the consensus of the Council that this policy will be reviewed and evaluated after a one-year period.

Councilor Arnett noted that the decal issuance policy states that vehicles without decals will not be allowed access to the transfer station and he moved to refer this to the Ordinance Committee to look into drafting an ordinance that would impose a fine for anyone entering the transfer station without a decal. Councilor Cushing seconded the motion and vote was 5 in favor and 2 opposed (Brann and Colford) – motion carried.

c. WATER DISTRICT RATE CASE - UPDATE

Manager Lessard reported that there is another conference call with all the parties scheduled for March 6th to discuss additional information submitted by the Water District. She further reported that Attorney Russell has contacted an attorney and the Town has received information about that law firm and should the Council decide to hire that firm, that discussion should take place in Executive Session.

Manager Lessard informed the Council that she met with Water District Superintendent Cam Torrey this morning to talk about the process that we are going through and that it had been the Council's hope that the District and the Council could work cooperatively in looking at the issues of cost and long-term use and all those things that impact the decision of who ends up running the District. Manager Lessard and Mr. Torrey feel that a vehicle for that might be a subcommittee of the Council that meets with a subcommittee of the Water District Board of Trustees to review the information necessary to understand fiscally and management-wise the operation of the District and come out with some sort of recommendation before either side has to hire an attorney. She reported that the Water District Board of Trustees will consider a resolution at their meeting on March 20th in support of working with the Town Council in looking at this idea of what is best for the ratepayers and taxpayers of Hampden. Councilor Brann requested that discussion of forming a subcommittee be placed on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC STAFFING SHORTAGE

Councilor Brann reported that during the Finance Committee meeting last week, there was discussion about current firefighter/paramedic coverage that it is of emergency in nature in that the ability to provide coverage for all shifts is not possible with current staff levels. He moved to set aside the rules for the purpose of adding an item to the agenda to discuss the paramedic situation at

this time. Councilor Cushing seconded the motion and vote was unanimously in favor.

Motion by Councilor Brann, seconded by Councilor Cushing to add to the agenda a discussion of the paramedic shortfall situation – unanimous vote in favor.

Public Safety Director Joe Rogers reported that the Fire Department has been staffing one of the crews with Call Firefighters who were qualified to fulfill the duties of a firefighter and an EMT. Three of those four people, including the live-in student, have found full-time employment and are no longer available to fill that void. There are no other people on the Call Department who are qualified at this time. Joe said he can fill it with overtime on a short-term basis, but that gets to be cost-prohibitive over the long-term and puts a strain on the staff. He asked for authorization to advertise for a full-time firefighter/paramedic position.

Motion by Councilor Brann, seconded by Councilor Colford to authorize the Public Safety Director to advertise for a full-time firefighter/paramedic position to fill the need – By roll call vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

b. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE MISSIONS/PROCEDURES –
COUNCILOR CUSHING

In light of the fact that there are several new committees and committees that are experiencing growth in membership, Councilor Cushing feels that it is appropriate to review the policies and procedures of the committees and to provide appropriate education for new members. He requested that the Council establish a subcommittee to review the procedures and missions of current committees to ensure consistency and standardization. It was decided that Councilors Cushing and Cox will serve on that subcommittee with 2 to 3 other people who have served or are currently serving on town committees.

c. CONSIDERATION OF CREATING TECHNOLOGY
COMMITTEE – COUNCILOR CUSHING

Councilor Cushing noted that it has become clear that technology is no longer just a supplement in providing government services, but has become an integral part of that. To that end, he thought it would be appropriate to create a technology committee and draw on the expertise of staff and members of the community to help in identifying what role information technology will continue to play in the provisions of those services. Following discussion, Councilor Brann moved and Councilor Cushing seconded to refer this item to the Communications Committee for discussion and feedback to the full Council – unanimous vote in favor.

D. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Colford reported that the Appointments Committee meeting scheduled for February 26th had to be cancelled due to the weather and will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

Councilor Brann reported that the Finance Committee met last week and reviewed ambulance billing, looked at personnel issues and is in the process of collecting information on tax rebate programs for senior citizens. The Committee will continue with regularly scheduled meetings.

Councilor Brann further reported that the Comprehensive Planning Committee will meet tomorrow evening following the Community Services Committee meeting.

Councilor Cushing reported that the Economic Development Committee met earlier this evening to review some items and he will be requesting a meeting in Executive Session to review contractual arrangements.

Councilor Cox reported that the Community Services Committee will meet tomorrow evening and will be looking at its mission statement and the Committee will prioritize 2 to 3 items it would like to have featured in the newsletter or on the *Hampden Highlights* program.

E. MANAGER'S REPORT

A copy of the Manager's Report is attached hereto.

F. COUNCILOR'S COMMENTS

Councilor Brann commented that in reviewing the issues that needed to be looked at by the Town's Economic Development Committee, one of those items was whether the TIF Policy that was created to stimulate initial development within the business park should continue the way it is or if TIF should be used for other things. Some other suggestions that have come up out of comprehensive planning are workforce housing development and specific kinds of businesses the Town wants to see. Councilor Brann reported that the Town's Economic Development Committee felt that the policy is fine as is and he asked if the Council agrees with that assessment or if this is an issue that should come before the Council's Economic Development Committee or Finance Committee. Councilor Brann also felt that the Pine Tree Zones need to be reviewed and that the Town needs to consider the concept of impact fees.

Councilor Arnett said he would like to see a review of the Host Community Benefit Fund Policy.

MANAGER'S REPORT
03/03/08

Tax Due Date – A reminder that second half of 2008 property taxes are due by Wednesday, April 2nd to avoid interest.

Re-scheduled Appointments Committee Meeting – We need to reschedule the Appointments Committee meeting that was cancelled on 2/26/08.

MDOT Grant Money – Pedestrian Access – Fred Michaud of MDOT called on Friday to ask if the Town was interested in \$5,000 in grant money for pedestrian access planning. He will be submitting the application through EMDC for us for that purpose.

Budget Schedule – I will be submitting the budget hearing schedule at the next Council meeting for your review and consideration.

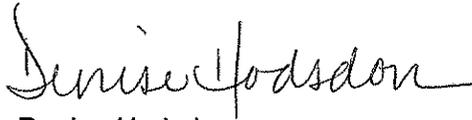
EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion by Councilor Cushing, seconded by Councilor Brann to enter executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(A) for the purpose of discussing contractual matters relating to Economic Development, to include the Town Council, Town Manager and Town Attorney – unanimous vote in favor.

Motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Brann to re-enter regular session at 11:05 pm – unanimous vote in favor.

G. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 p.m.



Denise Hodsdon
Town Clerk