

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

MAY 5, 2008

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hampden Town Council was held on Monday, May 5, 2008. The meeting was held at the municipal building council chambers and was called to order by Mayor Briggs at 7:00 p.m.

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

Town Manager: Susan Lessard

Town Counsel: Thomas Russell

Department Heads/Staff: Public Works Director Chip Swan and Public Safety Director Joseph Rogers

Joan Kirk and Julie Urban of Hampden Garden Club and citizens

A. CONSENT AGENDA

Treasurer's Warrants were circulated for approval and signatures of the Finance Committee. Councilor Arnett requested that Item A.3.a. be set aside. Motion by Councilor Cushing, seconded by Councilor Cox to accept the balance of the Consent Agenda – unanimous vote in favor.

A.3.a. COUNTY TAX 2008

Councilor Arnett asked how the county budget is arrived at and if the town has any influence over how much the county tax increases. Manager Lessard explained that the Council has a representative on the County Budget Committee – Councilor Gilberti was the Town's representative for this year's budget. The increase to the Town of Hampden this year is approximately \$40,000 or 7.4%, not because the County tax was up that much, but because Hampden's share increased due to an increase in our valuation. The County's overall budget increase was 3.13% and the biggest cost-driver is the jail. Motion by Councilor Arnett, seconded by Councilor Cox to accept Item A.3.a. – unanimous vote in favor.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ed Emmons of 681 Main Road North addressed the Council regarding the Hampden Trailer Park. He said he is in the process of renewing his Mobile Home Park license and has been working with Code Enforcement Officer Ben Johnson. Mr. Emmons has a few questions regarding some provisions in the Mobile Home Park Ordinance. He left a list of those questions and staff will contact him with the answers.

Mr. Emmons also questioned whether it would be possible to change the general assistance guidelines. He said there are several residents in the park who are struggling, but their income is just over the guidelines. Mayor Briggs explained that the guidelines are set by the State and each case is different, but staff can provide him with some general information.

C. POLICY AGENDA

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

2. NOMINATIONS-APPOINTMENTS-ELECTIONS

Appointments Committee Recommendations:

- a. Chris Packard – Tree Board – New Appointment
- b. Lance Case – Tree Board – New Appointment
- c. Jim Feverston – Tree Board – New Appointment
- d. Phil Stack – Tree Board – New Appointment
- e. Jason McIntyre – Recreation Committee – New Appointment
- f. Jim Kiser – Economic Development Committee – Reappointment
- g. School Board Appointment

Appointments Committee Chair Colford reported that the Committee is recommending the appointment of Rick Moore to the School Board and appointment of all other applicants as listed.

Motion by Councilor Arnett, seconded by Councilor Cushing to appoint all applicants as listed and recommended by the Appointments Committee – unanimous vote in favor.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. MAINE STATE RETIREMENT – DOCUMENTATION OF PROGRAM

Manager Lessard informed the Council that Maine State Retirement System has requested documentation that the Town does not offer retirement benefits to part-time employees. She said this is a housekeeping item and requested that the Council sign the letter she had prepared. Motion by Councilor Brann, seconded by Councilor Colford to sign the letter as requested – unanimous vote in favor.

b. POLICE CRUISER BIDS

Public Safety Director Joe Rogers informed the Council that bid requests were mailed to several Maine dealers from Millinocket to Augusta, but the notice did not get published in the local newspaper. He noted that historically, the Town does not get many bids for police vehicles and the bids that were received are the two we usually receive bids from. He requested that the Council accept the low bid from Quirk in the amount of \$21,833 even though the notice was not published in the newspaper.

Motion by Councilor Cushing, seconded by Councilor Brann to waive the requirement that the request for bids be published in the newspaper as dealerships were directly contacted – unanimous vote in favor.

Motion by Councilor Arnett, seconded by Councilor Cushing to accept the bid from Quirk for a 2008 Crown Victoria in the amount of \$21,833.00 – unanimous vote in favor.

c. POLICE & FIRE CONTRACTS – FINANCE COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATION

Because the Finance Committee was unable to meet prior to the Council meeting, this item was postponed until the next Council meeting. A meeting of the Finance Committee was scheduled for Thursday, May 8th at 7:00 pm.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. SEWER COMMITMENT

Manager Lessard explained that the Council needs to sign a commitment every time sewer bills are sent out. She requested that the Council sign the Certificate of Commitment. Motion by Councilor Cushing, seconded by Councilor Brann to sign the commitment – unanimous vote in favor.

b. CARPETING – ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

Manager Lessard had asked Public Works Director Chip Swan to obtain a quote for new carpeting in the Planning/Assessing/Code Enforcement Office and the Economic Development Office. Chip received a proposal from Saliba's Carpet in the amount of \$3776.00 for the carpeting and a quote from Parker K. Bailey & Sons in the amount of \$750.00 to move all furniture before and after installation. Manager Lessard said the total amount of \$4,526.00 would come from the Municipal Building Reserve account.

Motion by Councilor Brann, seconded by Councilor Cushing to authorize the expenditure of \$4,526.00 from the Municipal Reserve Account for carpeting and moving expense – unanimous vote in favor.

c. FLUSHER TRUCK REPAIR ISSUES

Public Works Director Chip Swan said the flusher truck is 30 years old and the pump is 10 years old and is weak; the holding tank is rusted and leaking; the flusher part was purchased 20 years ago. While flushing some lines last week, the motor in the truck died. In reviewing the cost to refurbish or replace the truck, Chip has been advised that the cost of a new flusher truck would cost approximately \$150,000; contracting this service would cost between \$18,750 to \$25,000 annually; or refurbishing the existing truck could be done for approximately \$60,000, or \$6,000 per year

over a 10-year period. He recommended refurbishing the existing truck by replacing the flusher pump, the tank, putting a rebuilt motor in the truck and painting the truck.

Motion by Councilor Brann, seconded by Councilor Cushing to authorize refurbishing the existing truck at a cost of up to \$60,000 with funds to come from the Sewer Reserve fund.

During discussion Mayor Briggs stated he could support the motion if it was amended to include that \$6,000 come from the Public Works budget each year to replenish the Sewer Reserve fund. Manager Lessard noted that the flusher truck is used solely for flushing sewer lines and suggested that because this would put more responsibility on the tax base and away from the sewer user base, perhaps there should be further discussion about taking it from the Public Works budget. It was decided that the Finance Committee will add this to its agenda for further discussion and assessment.

Vote on the motion as originally stated was unanimously in favor.

d. HAMPDEN GARDEN CLUB – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT
FUNDRAISING – JOAN KIRK and JULIE URBAN

This item was moved to the beginning of the agenda. Hampden Garden Club members Joan Kirk and Julie Urban informed the Council that Harmony Hall is in need of substantial repairs and the Club will be looking to the community for fundraising efforts. The Club is in the process of identifying structural needs and obtaining quotes for the repairs. They are also looking into grant options. The granite foundation is in need of repair, there is a bulge in one side of the building, the windows are falling out and the sills are rotting. The Club has obtained 501c3 status and is hoping to partner with the Town to promote Harmony Hall as a community building.

Manager Lessard suggested that the Club could use the Town as a partner and conduit for grants and offered staff assistance in writing any grants. Councilor Cushing said the Communications Committee will do a show to provide more exposure of the Club's needs and efforts.

- e. 2009 BUDGET:
1. INTRODUCTION
 2. RECREATION
 3. POOL
 4. LIBRARY

The budgets for the Recreation Department, the Lura Hoit Pool and the Edythe Dyer Library will be reviewed at a later date. However Manager Lessard gave an introduction of the proposed FY 2009 budget. The budget will result in a net increase of 3% and will include an additional full-time Firefighter/Paramedic position, upgrading the GIS/IT position from part-time to full-time, addition of Saturday service for the bus, additional staffing for buildings & grounds, and a 2.5% cost of living adjustment for employees. Debt service is up \$80,000 this year due to the gravel road paving project.

The front portion of the municipal building and the pool building both need new roofs. Manager Lessard said that there is good news on the revenue side and there is approximately \$14,000,000 in new construction valuation, which will result in \$220,000 in new tax dollars.

The preliminary budget will be posted on the Town's website.

D. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Arnett reported that he attended the most recent Cable Consortium meeting. The Consortium by-laws call for a 1% fee from each member community and the 1% is part of the cable franchise fee that each community receives. Last year the fee was reduced to .5% and they may do that again this year. However, they are also considering a proposal to develop a consortium-wide public access channel programming in conjunction with NESCOM and the community college. Councilor Arnett feels that there is not much zip in the consortium any more and said he would like permission to take this to the Communications Committee to discuss whether the Town should continue to be a member. Motion by Councilor Cushing, seconded by Councilor Arnett to forward this to the Communications Committee for review and to report back to the Council – unanimous vote in favor.

Councilor Arnett further reported that the Council met earlier this evening with SAD #22 officials regarding the proposed new high school. He noted that one of the issues they did not get to in the meeting was the reuse of the old facility. He noted that there have been some informal discussions regarding the reuse and pointed out that there may be some State rules and regulations that pertain to reuse of such a facility. He requested that Attorney Russell provide some research into whether there are any legal rules that govern that activity so that the Council and Comprehensive Planning Committee will have some idea of what the range of options are for SAD #22 and for the Town. Councilor Arnett stressed the importance of more communications between the two entities and feels it is important for staff planners to be involved.

Councilor Brann reported that the Comprehensive Planning Committee will receive a draft of the Comprehensive Plan at tomorrow's meeting for review. Copies will also go to the Town Manager and staff for review and then back to the Committee for any revisions. Next it will go to the Council for its consideration and then the public review process will take place during this summer.

Councilor Cushing reported that the Committee on Committees will meet at noon on Thursday, May 8th in the Council Chambers.

Councilor Cox reported that the Community Services Committee will meet tomorrow at 6:00 pm and will work on language regarding the Friends of Dorothea Dix and planning for the Arbor Day celebration on May 17th.

E. MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Lessard reported that the Public Safety Awards Dinner has been rescheduled to May 20th.

The Hampden Business Association Dinner will be held on May 14th at 6:00 pm.

She reported that a paralegal student from Husson College has been working as an intern for the Town and has organized many old records and continued with the Town Clerk's project of indexing prior Council minutes back to 1991. She pointed out that the Town has fared well by utilizing area college interns and noted that Gretchen Heldmann will graduate with her Masters this weekend.

The new transfer station rules went into effect last week and Manager Lessard spent time at the transfer station to sell stickers on both Saturday and Sunday - she sold 45 stickers. The coming weekend will be the first weekend for accepting C & D under the new rules and there will be additional people on hand, including the Public Works Director.

Manager Lessard offered congratulations to Assistant Recreation Director Shelley Abbott who has been recognized by her peers and recently received the Young Professional of the Year Award from the Maine Association of Parks and Recreation.

F. COUNCILOR'S COMMENTS

Councilor Cox reminded everyone about the Hike for the Homeless on May 10th and the Stream Cleanup on May 17th. She further commented that she thought the meeting with SAD #22 officials was productive.

Councilor Cushing encouraged everyone to participate in the Hike for the Homeless and said he was looking forward to seeing a "sea of purple". He also congratulated Manager Lessard on receiving her degree from the University of Maine and noted that it shows her dedication to fulfill her pledge.

Councilor Arnett encouraged golfers to participate in the Hampden Children's Day golf tournament fundraiser on Saturday, May 17th.

Councilor Colford commented that he was at the pool this weekend and the children were really enjoying the recently refurbished seashell slide. He also suggested that it is time to look into putting in a restroom area outside the pool for use by those using the playground and recreational area.

G. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Denise Hodsdon
Town Clerk