

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

DECEMBER 1, 2008

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hampden Town Council was held on Monday, December 1, 2008. The meeting was held at the municipal building council chambers and was called to order by Mayor Briggs at 7:05 p.m.

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

Town Manager: Susan Lessard

Town Counsel: Thomas Russell

Department Heads/Staff: Public Safety Director Joseph Rogers

School Building Committee members Kathy Walker and Norman Prouty

Mayor Briggs noted that Councilor Murphy was unable to attend the meeting and had requested an excused absence. Motion by Councilor Colford, seconded by Councilor Arnett to excuse Councilor Murphy – unanimous vote in favor.

A. CONSENT AGENDA

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

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

C. POLICY AGENDA

Manager Lessard informed the Council that there was an item which had been inadvertently left off the agenda for this meeting. She requested that the Council set aside the rules to add an item from Goodwill Riders Snowmobile Club regarding relocation of the snowmobile trails.

Motion by Councilor Brann, seconded by Councilor Arnett to set aside the rules to add an item to the agenda – unanimous vote in favor.

Motion by Councilor Arnett, seconded by Councilor Cox to add the item regarding Goodwill Riders Snowmobile Club's relocation of the snowmobile trails to the agenda as Item C.3.c. – unanimous vote in favor.

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a. APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF A VICTUALER'S LICENSE RECEIVED FROM KLITON XHEMALI, d/b/a ANGELO'S PIZZA at 102 MAIN ROAD SOUTH – CONTINUED

This item had been continued from the last meeting because there were some violations with the hood system which needed to be corrected before the license can be issued. Manager Lessard informed the Council that the work has not yet been completed, but is scheduled for December 7th. Motion by Councilor Brann, seconded by Councilor Arnett to continue this item until the next regular meeting – unanimous vote in favor.

- b. APPLICATION FOR VICTUALER'S LICENSE RECEIVED FROM CARROLL CREW, LLC d/b/a PAT'S PIZZA at 662 MAIN ROAD NORTH

Mayor Briggs opened the hearing.

Proponents – None; Opponents – None; General Questions or Comments – None. The hearing was closed.

Motion by Councilor Arnett, seconded by Councilor Brann to approve the application – unanimous vote in favor.

2. NOMINATIONS-APPOINTMENTS-ELECTIONS

There were none.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE – FIRE TRUCK RECOMMENDATION

Public Safety Committee Chair Colford reported that the Committee met with Public Safety Director Joe Rogers and Lt. Ray Pipes of the Fire Department regarding the proposed new truck and he asked Joe to discuss the truck the Department is hoping to acquire. Joe requested permission to solicit bids for a pumper/tanker truck to replace both the current tank truck and the existing second-responding fire engine which is due to be replaced in 1½ years. He noted that there are not enough funds in the reserve account to fully pay for the new truck and if a bid is accepted, the Finance Committee will have to discuss funding options. Councilor Colford reported that it was the Committee's recommendation to go out to bid for a pumper/tanker truck at this time.

Motion by Councilor Colford, seconded by Councilor Cox to allow the Public Safety Director to go out to bid for the fire truck with the specifications requested by the Department – unanimous vote in favor.

b. SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE – KATHY WALKER and
NORMAN PROUTY

School Building Committee member Kathy Walker reported that the favorable outcome of the vote on the new school was very gratifying for all who worked on the project. However, now the difficulty will be getting the school constructed as the State has frozen the funding for capital projects and it appears that construction will be delayed for another year until January 2011. With this delay, the Committee is anticipating moving forward with construction in September 2010.

Norm Prouty expressed appreciation to the Council for its work in making this project happen.

The Committee will continue to meet, but it has been restructured and divided into sub-committees which will each deal with different facets of the project. There is an academic sub-committee; a materials/construction sub-committee and Norman Prouty will be part of that committee; and a community use sub-committee, on which Kathy Walker will serve.

It was decided that Kathy and Norm will provide monthly written reports of the Building Committee's activities to the Council as part of its Consent Agenda.

c. GOODWILL RIDERS SNOWMOBILE CLUB – REROUTING OF
SNOWMOBILE TRAIL

Manager Lessard informed the Council that the Goodwill Riders Snowmobile Club is requesting town funding in the amount of \$587.63 to be used to purchase materials to construct three bridges. She noted that the Town receives almost \$3,000 from the State for reimbursement of snowmobile registration fees and currently only \$1,000 of that amount is given to the Club. She asked for permission to use up to \$600 additional funds from the State's reimbursement to be used for this project.

Motion by Councilor Colford, seconded by Councilor Cox to approve up to \$600 from the State snowmobile reimbursement for the Goodwill Riders Snowmobile Club to fix the Reed's Brook trail – unanimous vote in favor.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. LIBRARY ROOF REPAIRS – AUTHORIZATION FOR PAYMENT OF
\$3900 TO MARDEN CONSTRUCTION FROM RESERVE ACCOUNT

Manager Lessard explained that this is an authorization to pay for the work to be done at the Library. The Town will pay for the materials and Marden Construction will provide labor only. Motion by Councilor Brann, seconded by Councilor Cox to authorize payment of \$3,900 to Marden Construction from the Library Reserve fund – unanimous vote in favor.

b. **MANAGER ANNUAL REPORT - 2008**

A copy of the Manager's Annual Report is attached. It will also be posted on the Town's website.

D. COMMITTEE REPORTS

As Chair of the Public Safety Committee and Appointments Committee, Councilor Colford expressed appreciation to the members of both committees for all their hard work this past year.

Councilor Arnett reported that the Charter & Ordinance Committee met this evening and is working on revisions to the Mobile Home Park Ordinance. The revisions have been completed and will be on the next Council agenda. The Committee continues discussion of Zoning Ordinance text amendments relating to building permits and height and use regulations for water-dependent uses.

Councilor Arnett further reported that the Communications Committee is working on the next newsletter and the deadline for this issue is Friday, December 6th. The Committee continues to review equipment issues and website utilization and is planning a Hampden Highlights Day for Saturday, January 17th in the Community Room.

Councilor Cox reported that the Community Services Committee will be meeting tomorrow at 6:30 pm. Agenda items include updates from the Friends of Dorothea Dix and the Tree Board as well as a review of the Recreation Committee bylaws.

E. MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Lessard reported that the new ambulance had a fire in the engine compartment while in the bay after returning from a call on Thanksgiving Day. There is video from the surveillance system which will be part of the record for the investigation into what happened. The damage appears to be limited to the engine compartment. The Fire Department is looking into the possibility of getting a loaner ambulance until ours is rebuilt.

She reminded the Council that the Hampden Business Association will be meeting tomorrow at Haverlock, Estey & Curran.

The Annual Tree Lighting will take place this Sunday at 4:00 pm at the Municipal Building.

There has been a suggestion from a resident that the Town collect returnables at the Transfer Station and that the money be dedicated to a Town-maintained fund for fuel assistance. She asked the Public Works Committee to think about this possibility.

Manager Lessard extended her best wishes to Councilor Murphy as he recovers in the hospital.

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

Susan Lessard, Town Manager

As of December 11th, I will have completed 8 years as the Town Manager here in Hampden. Although there have been many challenges, I believe that we have accomplished a lot of good work during that time. The Town is fiscally healthy, operationally sound, and staffed with many people who provide excellent public service to the residents of the community.

Every department has had its own set of challenges during 2008 but we have made progress in many areas.

Administration/Council –

- ◆ The front office began accepting debit cards during this year and the response has been very favorable.
- ◆ The use of Rapid Renewal for online vehicle re-registration is remaining steady at approximately 5-6 registrations per week.
- ◆ Our banking switch to Maine Savings for the General Fund, Reserve, and Sewer checking accounts has gone very smoothly. We are getting great service and their proximity to the office makes the banking relationship even easier.
- ◆ Moving the Reserve Account Investments to Bangor Savings Bank has also gone extremely smoothly. That relationship was expanded to include the Hampden Environmental Trust as well.
- ◆ Despite the economic downturn that has put many investments in jeopardy, town funds have consistently been invested in FDIC insured cd's and U.S. Treasury notes so there is no risk of loss in our accounts
- ◆ The November 2008 election saw the highest voter turnout in Hampden history with nearly 4500 voters casting ballots. Much credit to the entire staff for the professional and capable manner in which it was handled – and to Town Clerk Denise Hodsdon who worked many extra hours despite having just returned to work from serious surgery.
- ◆ Two foreclosed properties were sold during 2008. There remain only two tax accounts in foreclosure in Hampden and both are faithful in maintaining monthly, long-term payment plans. Tax Collector Cheryl Johnson does a very good job of staying on top of the tax collection effort. As of November 30th we are at nearly 51% collection for 2008/2009 taxes with the second half not due until 04/01/09.
- ◆ The Town successfully intervened in the Water District Rate increase case and the resulting rates were less than originally requested by the District. The Council and Water

District have also set up a twice-a-year meeting schedule in order to stay current with District information and to maintain better lines of communication.

- ◆ The Town Council authorized participation in both the regional Hazardous Materials Collection Day and the continuation of the subsidize Home Composter program that has now distributed nearly 300 composters in Hampden over the past 5 years.
- ◆ The Council adopted a budget for 2008/09 that required only a .20 adjustment upward to the mil rate. This occurred despite the fact that no increases in valuations not related to actual construction were made for the second year in a row.
- ◆ The Town Council approved participation in a program to locate American Flags on lighted poles in the Kennebec-Route 1A-Western Avenue area. They were put up in the Spring and removed in November after Veteran's Day. The committee that originally asked for the town's participation will be providing storage for the flags for the winter and replacing any that were damaged and appropriately disposing of those.
- ◆ The Council spent a good deal of time working with the School on the new high school project, both through the efforts of representatives Kathy Walker and Norm Prouty and also councilors who attended numerous meetings on the subject.
- ◆ Long-time Councilor Robert Gilberti resigned effective 12/31/07 and was replaced January 1st by former Councilor Andre Cushing who was elected in the 11/07 election and will serve until the end of 2009.
- ◆ The landfill closure plan continues to move forward smoothly. The last waste delivery will be some time in 2009 but no later than 12/31/09. The first phase of three closure phases was completed as of October 2008. The second phase will be closed in 2009 and the final phase in 2010. The landfill will pay the tax rebate program to participating abutters through the full 2009/2010 tax year despite the fact that waste deliveries will cease no later than 12/31/09.
- ◆ Committee level work for the Town Council was at an unprecedented level for this year. The time commitment for everyone has been considerable. The Committee on Committees will be reporting its findings at the last meeting in December of 2008 with an eye toward creating some efficiencies and standardization in the way that committees and their staff work and report.
- ◆ The Council established a Goals & Objectives session to be held annually in January in order to make sure that

projects, planning, and budget priorities are set according to the Goals and Objectives established for the year.

Communications

- ◆ The newsletter has continued to be a viable and worthwhile endeavor. Annie O'Reilly was made Editor of the publication during 2008 and has done a great job of getting the process coordinated in a timely manner.
- ◆ Cable TV continues to offer a wide range of programming on topics of municipal interest as well as Planning Board and Town Council meetings.
- ◆ The Town website is still a work in progress with a few departments still not fully integrated. The goal is to have that current, as well as to consider ways to offer more 'on-line' information in the near future.
- ◆ In a paper-saving and efficiency-improving measure, the Council will be going to 'paperless' packets at the beginning of the 2009 year and using town-provided laptops at meetings. We will also be installing wireless internet capability in the Town Office complex so that persons attending meetings can access the internet without 'plugging in' to the Town network. The cost for this access is minimal and fits with the desire to offer as much via the internet to residents as possible.

Facilities & Infrastructure

- ◆ The Council Chambers were revamped this year resulting in a much more pleasant and professional atmosphere in which to conduct the business of the town.
- ◆ The expansion of Lakeview Cemetery was completed this past summer. It has added +/- 1500 additional lots and was done by the Town public works department.
- ◆ The regular road paving was, fortunately, done in May of 2008 at the bid price submitted. Many communities who waited until later in the summer to bid found the prices unaffordable – and some had contractors who refused to honor an earlier-submitted price.
- ◆ We did not lock in to a price-per-gallon for fuel during the high-cost months. We remained at our regular rack plus 9 Cent price and have been under the budgeted \$4 per gallon by more than a dollar and a half for the past month – which should provide a cushion for later in the winter – or hopefully some year-end savings.
- ◆ The municipal building roof replacement will be completed by year end.

- ◆ The boiler replacement at the pool should be completed by mid-December and should help to further reduce fuel usage at that location.
- ◆ The Council accepted 5 new roads totaling 1.9 miles as well as an acre of open space in a subdivision that was submitted to the Planning Board.
- ◆ The Council authorized an engineering study of rebuilding Mayo Road.
- ◆ Air Conditioning was added to the Edythe Dyer Library and the library received a grant to cover half the cost of the project.
- ◆ The November Referendum approved a 1.8 million dollar project for repair of sewer lines as part of the ongoing line-replacement project. Construction should occur in 2009.
- ◆ We continue to work on a solution for the pump station problem at Mayo Road resulting from the disposal of a cloth-like material by a user or users whose sewer goes through that pump station. At the present time, the problem has cost nearly \$23,000 in additional fees for engineering as well as 'motor unclogging' by the City of Bangor.

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Equipment

- ◆ The Sewer Flusher truck was rehabbed at a much lower cost than a new unit and should give us another ten years of service or more as a result.
- ◆ The Town acquired a new large plow truck, a loader, and a tractor as replacement equipment at Public Works.
- ◆ The Town acquired a new police cruiser to replace one rotated out of service.
- ◆ The Town accepted a drug forfeiture car – a 2005 Subaru Impreza that has been very useful for staff that use it to attend meetings.
- ◆ Surveillance equipment was installed in the front part of the administration building at the time that the system in Public Safety was upgraded. This system came in handy when reviewing the recent ambulance fire in the truck bay since we were able to review exactly when it all occurred.

Public Safety

- ◆ Public safety hired a full-time paramedic/firefighter to complement the staff. The last staffing position had been filled by part-time personnel but due to relocations and job changes it was becoming more and more difficult to keep those shifts filled.
- ◆ The Community Room of the Public Safety end of the building continues to see considerable use – both with town

committees and outside groups who do a variety of municipal trainings.

- ◆ Public Safety has greatly reduced the number of assisted ambulance calls required due to the higher licensing level maintained when using the paramedics. That results in a larger percent of the proceeds from ambulance bills remaining with the town. Tammy Ewing has done a remarkable job in keeping our ambulance payment records up to date.
- ◆ Edwards Shop n Save led a fundraiser to provide a second 12-lead for the 2nd ambulance now in operation. That unit cost over \$14,000 and the bulk of it was donations – thank you to everyone who participated in those efforts.
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Public Works

- ◆ Changes were implemented in the operation of the Transfer Station in May of this year and in the first six months since those changes were implemented, the Town has saved nearly \$50,000.
- ◆ The Public Works department has contracted with MDOT to plow Route 1A and is being reimbursed by the state for approximately \$17,800. 2009 will be the second year that we have had that arrangement.
- ◆ Public Works Director Chip Swan completed his first year of employment with us after one of the worst winters in memory. He has done a good job of getting up to speed on a very complex and diverse range of responsibilities.

Recreation

- ◆ Recreation continues to have full bookings for Kids Korner before and after school programs despite having added a second location during this past year.
- ◆ Recreation Director Kurt Mathies coordinated and got donations sufficient to rebuild and relocate the Gazebo from behind the Post Office to the Recreation Area next to the Lura Hoit Pool. The rebuilt structure is handicapped accessible and provides a great place for parents to sit while watching their children on the playground/volleyball area.
- ◆ New picnic tables were built by high school students to replace ours that had deteriorated over time.
- ◆ A playground area was developed in Dorothea Dix Park by Eagle Scout Jason Edwards as his Eagle Scout Project.

- ◆ Assistant Director Shelley Abbot was named Young Recreation Professional of the year by the State Association of Parks and Recreation.
- ◆ Kids Kamp had another very successful summer season despite a dog-bite incident from a neighbor that required the program to be relocated from the Kiwanis Hall for the remainder of the summer.
- ◆

Planning

- ◆ The Town has continued work on the Comprehensive Plan with hopes of finalizing that work in 2009.
- ◆ The Community Services Committee has done a good deal of work related to parks and recreation with the result a separate Dorothea Dix Park Committee and a very active and involved Tree Board.
- ◆ The Town's Tree City USA designation has been memorialized with the location of a Tree City USA flag located in the front of the Municipal Building.
- ◆ The Finance Committee has developed the 'bones' of a possible long-term, over 65 tax credit program that the Council will be considering during 2009.
- ◆ The Finance Committee has begun work on a ten year Capital Budget plan with the idea that it can be considered as part of the 2009/2010 budget.
- ◆ The Public Safety Committee has recommended that the Public Safety Department be given permission to go out to bid for a fire truck replacement as per the schedule established.

Personnel

- ◆ Community & Economic Development Specialist Dean Bennett was hired in January of 2008 to coordinate the efforts planning and development on a full-time basis.
- ◆ Former Economic Development Director Bion Foster transitioned to a consultant role in July of 2008 in which he continued responsibilities for marketing the Business Park, participating in the Bangor Region Development Alliance, and acted as a resource for our new full-time staff person. The contract for those services ends 12/31/08. Bion suffered a stroke during the latter part of 2008 but I am happy to report that he is doing well and continuing to improve.
- ◆ Matt Thomas was hired as a new full-time paramedic/firefighter to fill the staffing problems resulting from limited call-paramedic availability.

- ◆ Town Clerk Denise Hodson was diagnosed with breast cancer, had surgery and returned to work. Further surgery will be necessary at the end of 2008/beginning of 2009. Team Denise was formed as a support measure for Denise and in addition to raising awareness – also raised over \$7500 for the Komen Race for the Cure in September of 2008. That effort was coordinated by Finance & Human Resource Officer Janie Pitcher who did a huge amount of work to get it all organized and off the ground.
- ◆ Nescom (New England School of Communication) continues to provide talented interns to us for help with our Cable TV system. At the present time Melissa Antononi and Sy Cody White are handling those responsibilities and long-term intern Brandon Gassett assists when he has the time.
- ◆ I was appointed as Chair of the Board of Environmental Protection by the Governor in November of this year.
- ◆ Transfer Station Operator Chris Everett was injured in a fall in August of 2008 but came back to work in October. His 6 month probationary period was extended to February to allow a fair amount of assessment time for both him and his supervisor.
- ◆ Public Works employee Paul Weaver suffered a serious injury when he developed a life-threatening reaction to multiple bee stings. Despite being in intensive care for four days in an induced coma, he was back to work within 8 days of the injury. Kudos to his workmates Donny Mclain and Denny Babcock whose quick thinking have been credited with saving his life.
- ◆ This year Paramedic/Firefighter Joe Dunton was awarded the Physical Fitness award by the Public Safety Director and Paramedic/Firefighter Shaun McNally was awarded the Public Safety Employee of the year award by his peers.
- ◆ Part-time GIS/IT staffer Gretchen Heldmann began work full time in July and has implemented a server-replacement project, worked in providing staffing and maps for Community Services and Comprehensive planning as well as contributing a great deal of time and effort on the mapping requirements of our MS4 storm water program – in addition to her regular work in maintaining the computer infrastructure for all town departments.

While considerably long – this report does not capture all that was accomplished during the 2008 year. That would take, at the very least – a short book! Every day the staff, volunteers, and elected officials of the community work to make Hampden a better place to live and work.

F. COUNCILOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Briggs said Councilor Murphy extended his appreciation for the flowers and would welcome calls.

Councilor Brann asked whether it would be possible to request that DOT take another look at the speed limit on Route 9 near the railroad tracks. He noted that with the higher speed limit and the crest of the hill, there is a period of time in which vehicles are not visible. He suggested that the siting distances need to be re-examined.

G. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.



Denise Hodsdon
Town Clerk