

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, May 30, 2006
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Auditorium**

1. Call to Order:

Chairman David Pinney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Location of Emergency Exits: not necessary, less than 100 in attendance.

3. Members Present:

Selectmen David Pinney, Kathy Devlin and Ernie Allsup

4. Pledge of Allegiance: The pledge of allegiance was recited.

5. Presentation of 2005 Citizen and Employee Awards:

David Pinney read a Certification of Appreciation to John Torres the recipient of the Robert B. Percoski citizenship award for 2005. All three selectmen congratulated John and made positive comments about his dedication to the Town of Somers as a citizen who has been willing to serve the town on the Zoning Board of Appeals and as a Meals on Wheels driver. John was also awarded a plaque.

All three selectmen made positive comments about Connie Carenzo's dedication to her job as Social Services Director as well as assistant to the First Selectman. Connie also received a plaque indicating that she was the recipient of the Adolf P. Anderson Quality Employee Award for 2005.

5.1 Brief Reception for Honorees:

There was a brief reception where light refreshments were served.

The Board of Selectmen meeting resumed at 7:40 p.m.

6. Citizen Comments: There were none.

7. Correspondence:

Peter Klein, Chairman of the Zoning Commission, sent a letter asking that he not be reappointed after his term expiration of June 25, 2006. Ernie Allsup made a motion to accept Peter Klein's resignation, effective June 25, 2006, with regret. Kathy Devlin seconded the motion that was approved unanimously.

8. Old Business:

8.1 Fire Marshal

Currently Walter Summers, Fire Marshal, and Glen Reynolds, Firefighter and Assistant Fire Marshal, have been working together to handle all the duties of a Fire Marshal.

Walter is employed in another town, so a more permanent solution to the position of Fire Marshal will have to be resolved. Alternatives discussed were:

1. hire a new part time Fire Marshal to serve as Walter has
2. have Glen Reynolds take over the Fire Marshal's duties entirely and hire an additional full-time firefighter to replace Glen's reduction in hours serving as a firefighter.

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The selectmen agreed that this would have to be worked out with money already in place in the budget adopted by the town. Money is already budgeted for a part-time Fire Marshal. A full-time firefighter would cost considerably more. Fire Chief Bill Meier stated that 65% of their calls are ambulance calls that are reimbursed. In the past three months, the Fire Department has responded to 13 calls with the second ambulance that would previously been covered by mutual aid. 90% of fees paid for ambulance calls go to the town's General Fund.

Kathy Devlin verified that Glen Reynolds could handle the duties of the Fire Marshal and still have time to be a Firefighter as well. In an emergency situation, he would have to be a Firefighter. The selectmen could look into the possibility of an additional appropriation for the upcoming fiscal year of about \$25,000 in order to be able to hire an additional full-time Fire Fighter. The selectmen also have to review other increases that are expected for the next fiscal year.

Walter Summers offered to be available for Fire Marshal duties in Somers for the first quarter of the next fiscal year. He mentioned that there are about 160 properties in Somers that need Fire Marshal inspection and also that there are several large developments in the works in town - one commercial, several age-restricted plus a large residential - that would require inspections by the Fire Marshal.

8.2 Schedule joint meeting with Fire Commission and Board of Finance to review long-term public safety needs for the Fire Department

Carl Rohrbach and Frank Lawlor of the Fire Commission were present and discussed the new developments plus the Somersville Mill and the Fire Department's resultant need for sub-stations. They would like to develop a reasonable long-term plan for public safety. Kathy Devlin feels that the Planning and Zoning Commissions should be included at some point. Frank Lawlor talked about establishing a public safety fund to help defray the cost of Fire Department expansion. David Pinney will schedule a meeting with the Fire Commission and the Board of Finance to review the commission's plan.

8.3 Appointments:

It was the consensus of the Board that the appointment of B.J. Ferro as an alternate on ZBA that was approved at the last town meeting needs to be rescinded because he is unaffiliated and the spot has to be filled by a Democrat. It was suggested that Tammy Erickson be contacted - she has already served as a WPCA member.

It was also suggested that Wesley Smith, a Zoning Commission alternate, be moved up to a full member following the resignation of Peter Klein.

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Ernie Allsup expressed his concern about getting people involved in town to volunteer for these open slots on various commissions and committees.

Appointments will be taken up in more detail at the next BOS meeting.

9. New Business:

9.1 Call a special town meeting to endorse appropriations and finalize ordinance changes and adoptions

Ernie Allsup made a motion to have a special town meeting on June 12, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Auditorium for the following reasons:

1. to approve an appropriation recommended by the Board of Finance in the amount of \$43,352 to cover the remaining expenses associated with the 2004 revaluation
2. to approve an appropriation recommended by the Board of Finance from the General Fund of \$100,985 to purchase safety equipment for the Somers Fire Department, 95% of said purchases to be reimbursed through a federal grant.
3. To ratify and set an effective date for the adoption of changes to the local Tax Relief Program Ordinance
4. To ratify and set an effective date for the adoption of the Design Review Board Ordinance

9.2 Approve training plan for Robert Wheeler and Scott Lessard

Kathy Devlin made a motion to approve the training plans presented for Robert Wheeler and Scott Lessard. This motion was seconded by Ernie Allsup and unanimously approved.

9.3 On-line tax payment proposal

The Tax Collector has been looking into the possibility of people paying their taxes on-line with a bank card. The taxpayer pays the fee. Kathy Devlin made a motion to endorse this on-line tax payment proposal; seconded by Ernie Allsup and unanimously approved.

9.4 Other:

Ernie Allsup made a motion to approve Steve Dupre's attendance at a code training seminary on June 20, 2006 and Patrice Carson's attendance at a land use law and practice seminar on June 9, 2006. This motion was seconded by Kathy Devlin and unanimously approved.

Ernie Allsup asked how cumbersome it would be to change the town seal into something more appealing and attractive. The Town Clerk will be asked about this.

Ernie Allsup also asked about increases in permit fees, particularly at the Transfer Station that will begin selling stickers on August 1, 2006. He suggested taking the cost of

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operating the Transfer Station and divide it by the number of people using the Transfer Station and thereby come up with a fee. David Pinney will bring this information back to the selectmen at the next meeting. The Board also discussed the possibility of increasing the fees for building permits, sanitation fees, conservation permit fees and zoning fees.

10. Plan of Conservation and Development

This agenda item will be deferred to a special meeting of the Board where sufficient time is available for an in depth discussion.

11. Authorization of Scheduled Payments

Ernie Allsup made a motion to authorize scheduled payments in the amount of \$423,524.16 generated on May 23, 25 and 30, 2006. This motion was seconded by Kathy Devlin and unanimously approved.

12. Appropriations/Transfers

There were several transfers presented by the Recreation Coordinator that were questioned by the Board. David Pinney will check on them and report back to the Board at the next meeting.

12.1 Tax Refunds

Kathy Devlin made a motion to approve tax refunds in the amount of \$251.27; seconded by Ernie Allsup and unanimously approved.

It was unanimously approved to add "Approval of BOS Minutes" to the agenda.

13: Approval of BOS Minutes:

Ernie Allsup made a motion to approve the BOS minutes of 5/1/06; seconded by David Pinney and unanimously approved.

Kathy Devlin made a motion to approve the BOS minutes of 5/15/06; seconded by David Pinney and unanimously approved.

14. Board of Selectmen Remarks

14.1 Update from First Selectman

David Pinney presented a letter he has written to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture requesting to partner with other towns and CRCOG in applying for a agricultural viability grant. CRCOG would be the primary grant applicant.

14.2 Other

The joint meeting with the Planning Department and Planimetrics personnel was discussed.

Kathy Devlin asked about the progress on the Whitaker property purchase and David Pinney told her it was progressing but rather slowly.

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The Parks Maintenance staffing was discussed. Parks Maintenance ideally consists of one full-time supervisor and a full-time assistant. Generally, there are two men, but the assistant alternates between several Public Works employees.

The Board asked about cemetery tours. David Pinney has been discussing this issue initially with Attorney Tom Fahey and will continue it with the Town Attorney. It has not yet been determined how much restriction can be placed on the public for tours of the cemeteries in town.

The Board asked about the Demolition Delay Ordinance and David Pinney said he has talked to Patrice Carson, Town Planner about this and is also seeking input from Carol Pyne.

Kathy Devlin mentioned attending the meeting with School Superintendent Angelo Vespe concerning shared services. David Pinney is following up on individual topics directly with school administrators.

15. Citizen Comments: There were none.

16. Adjournment:
The meeting was adjourned by mutual consent at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Pinney, First Selectman
Connie Careno, Recording Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING.