

Submitted by:

TOWN OF PHIPPSBURG  
SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Approved by Selectmen:

John M. Young  
Administrator

MINUTES  
February 4, 2009

*Meeting convened at 6:00 p.m. with Selectmen Pye, Douglass and Perkins in attendance. Selectman Douglass needed to leave prior to completion of meeting.*

**I. Review and Sign:**

1. Accounts payable and payroll warrants.
2. Meeting minutes.

**Selectmen voted (2-0) to approve warrants. Meeting minutes approved and signed.**

**II. Meetings and Hearings:**

1. Meet with the Budget Committee to discuss the upcoming budget cycle including cost of living raises for employees and elected officials as well as an increase in mileage rate. Also, the Selectmen will vote on an appointment to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Dan Coffin.

**Selectmen voted (3-0) to appoint Kim Albertson to the Budget Committee to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of Dan Coffin.**

**Administrator Young explained that the Department Supervisors and Committee/Commission Chairs need to have an idea of what proposed increase in salaries to base their budgets on. He explained that the CPI increase this year was 3.8% and Social Security COLA was 5.8% and in the past these figures have been used for increases. It was his opinion that FY 2010 would not be a bad budget year as far as the Municipal budget was concerned, but FY 2011 would be much more difficult because of the possibility of the excise tax referendum (to decrease excise taxes) passing vote in November. This is revenue that stays with the towns to reduce the tax base. He explained that it could mean a decrease of \$200,000 in surplus available to reduce taxes in 2011.**

**The Selectmen and Budget Committee discussed salary ranges from no increase to 5.8%. The Selectmen decided that the increase for budget planning purposes would be 5.8%. However, the final recommendation to voters would be determined at the last meeting with the Budget Committee after all the other budget figures are known.**

**The Selectmen and Budget Committee discussed a briefing prepared by Administrator Young, which is on file at the Town Office. Selectman Douglass stated that the Budget Committee needs to look at the cost of libraries, and whether there is a need to cut town services and employee staff hours.**

2. Meet with the Assessing Agent, Juanita Wilson, to review an abatement.

**Daniel and Susan Levey (Trustees) from 1 Painted Point Road (Map 037-Lot 016) were requesting an abatement for the 2008/2009 tax year, based on the building condition. Ms. Wilson explained that the building was over assessed by \$31,600 and recommended approval of the abatement for \$31,600 (\$360.24 in taxes). Selectmen voted (3-0) to approve abatement.**

**The Selectmen reviewed an e-mail from Ms. Wilson concerning her request for a contract increase of 5.8% (SS COLA – which is her basis each year). Selectmen Douglass asked if she thought the Assessing Agent's hours could be reduced after the re-valuation. Ms. Wilson replied that she would be buried in the fall with inquiries and she would probably be working 7 days a week. Then, after the revaluation is implemented, she would need the same number of hours as she does now because Phippsburg is a very labor intensive town. She added that if she does not receive the 5.8 % contract increase she would need to cut back 6 hours a month in Phippsburg to allow her to work with another town to make up the difference.**

3. Meet with Dick Lemont, Shellfish Chairman, to discuss proposal to open the State Park property for the commercial harvesting of shellfish from Dec 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

**This issue was discussed in length at the Selectmen's Meeting of January 14th. Selectmen reviewed and voted (3-0) to sign a letter to the Department of Conservation (copies to DMR) requesting that Commercial Harvesting of Phippsburg License holders be allowed from December 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>.**

### **III. Unfinished Business**

1. Review the Selectmen's policy on "Meeting Agendas and Minutes".

**Selectmen voted (3-0) to approve the "Meeting Agenda and Minutes" policy drafted January 7, 2009.**

2. Discuss the increase in deferred taxes and collections and discuss collection of back taxes on 58 Surf Street owned by Marguerite Small.

**The Selectmen reviewed a list of foreclosed properties that owe back taxes for the years between 2004 and 2006 (refer to Selectmen's Meeting on 1/14/09 for prior discussion). The Town Administrator will send letters to all property owners requesting that they either pay the amounts due, set up a payment plan, request a poverty abatement, or meet with the Selectmen.**

**The Selectmen will consider taking physical possession of the foreclosed properties if the owners fail to take any action.**

### **IV. New Business**

1. Discuss the appointment of Richard Wenzel to the Cemetery District, Inc. to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of Stan Trask.

**Selectmen voted (2-0) to appoint Mr. Wenzel. Selectman Perkins sustained from vote because he is the Cemetery Superintendent.**

2. Discuss the re-appointment of Leif Albertson to the CATV Committee.

**Selectmen voted (3-0) to re-appoint Mr. Albertson.**

3. Accept a donation of \$100.00 from Camilla Healey for the Goodwill Account.  
**Selectmen voted (3-0) to accept the donation.**
4. Review the estimate from Pine Tree Engineering for the Transfer Station upgrade.  
**Selectmen reviewed the estimate of \$106,000 to add a compactor and second building debris container. Administrator Young reported that there was only \$44,000 in the Transfer Station Capital Account and at the current rate of raising \$15,000 a year it would be another 5 years before the project could be completed (and that was based on prices not increasing). He recommended that the paving of the Clifford Road be bonded and the Road Capital Account request for this year be reduced from \$150,000 to \$75,000. This way the extra \$75,000 could be used for the Transfer Station rebuild this fall. He added that Road Commissioner Doughty and Les Smith, Road Committee Chair, were in favor of the funding proposal. Administrator Young will prepare the proposal for Budget Committee review and Town Meeting vote.**
5. Review draft procedures for the demolition permit process submitted by the Historical Preservation Commission.

**The Draft procedures were reviewed by the Selectmen. Marie Varian and Cliff Newell, Planning Board Members, were in attendance. It was decided that the "draft procedures" would be an amendment to the Land Use Ordinance and Selectman Perkins found the time line in the "draft procedures" to be very confusing. Cliff Newell added that the Commission should also be prepared to answer "is this place significant or not".**

**It was the consensus of the Selectmen that the "draft procedures" needed to be cleaned up and submitted as an ordinance amendment with Planning Board review and approval.**

**Mr. Newell stated that the attempt should be made to make the process quicker and easier for a building that is considered non-contributory. He added that the Historic Preservation Commission was supposed to have a list of significant buildings completed by now and to date none has been produced. Ms. Varian added that the Historic Preservation Commission has been working on the list for several years and even when completed it will constantly have to be revised. If the list is not maintained the whole procedure/ordinance goes out the window.**

**Ms. Varian stated that she would contact the Historic Preservation Commission and invite them to the upcoming Planning Board meeting. She also mentioned that any site walks the Commission does should be advertised.**

**Tom Totman stated that the Commission should be willing to meet on demand like the Board of Appeals instead of waiting for each monthly meeting to decide whether a building slated to be torn down is contributory or not.**

6. Briefing from Town Administrator concerning FEMA Reimbursement for December 2008 storms.

**Administrator Young explained that the Town could be partially reimbursed by FEMA and MEMA for funds expended for plowing and sanding from 12/11 to 12/29. He expects this to be approximately \$25,000.**

7. Briefing from Selectman Pye on the alternative energy presentation he attended.

**Selectman Pye discussed the possible need for a Windmill ordinance which would outline required setbacks from property lines and where they could be located. Marie Varian stated that there are no height restrictions on windmills at this time and that DEP has reduced Shoreland setbacks for them. She added that she would hate to see severe regulations on windmills. Selectman Douglass agreed with Ms. Varian and stated that he would like to see ordinances fairly relaxed for windmills.**

8. Discuss the format of the 2008/2009 Town Report.

**Administrator Young and the Selectmen discussed the pros and cons of changing the size of the 2008/2009 Town Report from 6 x 9 to 8 ½ x 11.**

**Input was gathered from the audience in attendance and it was decided to try the larger size because the print would be larger and easier to read and it would require less time to format.**

**Administrator Young also reminded the Selectmen that the decision was made last year not to mail Town Reports out of town unless it was specifically requested by the property owner and that the list of income and expenditures (Treasurer's Report) would be reduced in detail because the information is on file at the Town Office upon request. These measures were put in place to save cost and staff time.**

#### **V. Selectmen/Administrator Comments and Announcements**

1. Administrator Mike Young

**Announced upcoming meetings and events.**

#### **VI. Adjournment - Selectmen voted (2-0) to adjourn at 7.24 p.m.**