

**MINUTES**  
**SELECT BOARD**  
**TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH**  
Tuesday, February 7, 2012 – 6:00pm  
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

**Present:** Joe Byk, Barbara Miller, Elizabeth Thomas

**Also Present:** Pamela Brenner, Rodney Bartlett, Nancie Vaihinger, Jeff King, Nicole MacStay

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**Chair Miller** called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

### **Public Hearing – Proposed Transfer of Walcott Conservation Easement**

**Francie Von Mertens** of the Conservation Commission explained that the easement on this 145 acre parcel was donated to the town in 1985. Five months after donating the easement the family donated the land to the town. Since it is a conflict of interest to enforce an easement on a piece of land you hold title to, the Conservation Commission approached the Harris Center to take the easement. The Conservation Commission has also approved a \$5,000 payment to the Harris Center from the Conservation Commission's fund to aid the monitoring. There were no questions or comments. The Board took the request under advisement, pending a second hearing. **Ms. Von Mertens** added that these easements add up to 705 acres of land conserved in Peterborough this year. Trails will be opened on the Otter Brook easement this year. There was further discussion about the conservation land in town, and the difference between permanent conservation easements and state or government owned land. Ms. Brenner said that around the state and the country governments are spending millions to conserve land; to the credit of the Conservation Commission they had really leveraged their funds.

### **Project Open Voice Update**

**Bryan Christian** of Comcast said that they are here to unveil the public piece of the Project Open Voice project. The "Local Look Peterborough" website is now in beta, and is accessible by anyone. This project could not have gotten this far without the help of town staff, particularly Pam Brenner, Alex Oakes, Fash Farashahi and Nicole MacStay. The idea behind the project is to create a new forum to complement public access television. **Chair Miller** said that the Town already has a website, and asked how this website contrasts with it. Mr. Christiansen said that this is where you would get information from community partners, and some peripheral content from the town. This is to supplement the Town's website, and is open to the public. The site was soft launched on January 28<sup>th</sup>, and may look different a year from now. This is a pilot, and we want to shape it the way that the community wants it. **Mr. Byk** asked why this wasn't TV based; **Mr. Christensen** said that there is a TV component but it is not as robust. There are a couple of meetings there On Demand. We hope to grow that platform as well. **Bill Smith** of inHaus Media showed a PowerPoint presentation which reviewed the details of the site, and showed one of the videos that had already been posted. **Ms. Thomas** asked how they will get the word out about this site. **Mr. Christensen** said that in early spring we will do a loud launch, but first they wanted to do a soft launch.

### **NEA Our Town Grant Proposal for Armory Garage**

**Rodney Bartlett** said that this grant requires that there is town support. The NEA will only accept one application from a town. The more collaborators there are the stronger the application. It does

require a match of 50%, which would be \$150,000. The grant will not pay for construction, renovation or purchase of property, just planning, design, arts engagement or revitalization, but no physical construction, purchase or renovation. Town staff have been working on one in collaboration with the 1833 Society on another NEA grant application involving the Library. **Mr. Byk** said that a couple of years ago when talking about Evans Flats he had a notion of doing a performing arts center at the main building, but that isn't going to happen. This idea is similar; a non-profit would take care of the center, and it would be run in a financially sustainable way. **Karen Fitzgerald** said that her thought was to look at a flexible multi-use center in the garage space. If the Library project is not going to go forward this year, she said she hoped that they could work with a non-profit organization and the Town and apply.

**Chair Miller** asked if she would be able to come up with the match; **Ms. Fitzgerald** said that it would be a conglomeration, and **Mr. Byk** said that there would be some in-kind. **Ms. Fitzgerald** said that they are not looking at design work, but maybe a conceptual site plan, and a feasibility study. **David Weir** of the 1833 Society said that they are trying to design and raise funds for a new Library. They are currently at the stage of evaluating alternative sites and facilities. The overlay with a cultural center that could be very apt and very strong. One of the features of modern libraries is to have a high-tech auditorium/meeting place that could serve as a concert hall and other audio/visual events. There is an overlay with what they are talking about, and which MacDowell is talking about. There is also a key private individual whose name shall not be divulged who is passionate about having a concert hall in Peterborough. **Chair Miller** asked if they have worked with ConVal as well; **Mr. Weir** said that yes, ConVal will be an important part of the design of a new library facility and programs. And as we talked about it, it would be great to bring in other educational organizations that could all be served by databases that could be maintained by the Library.

**Loretta Laurenitis** said that this is a decision on what is happening with that property. She said that she was on the Evans Flats Steering Committee where they talked about that property being used for arts for a ten year period. She said that she looked at this as a ten year plan and what could be done with the property during that time. There had been discussions about a police/fire complex or public works. She then asked if the Board is moving ahead with this, does that mean that it will continue to be a community center; **Chair Miller** said that they are considering the garage, not the main building tonight. **Ms. Laurenitis** said that it hasn't been decided what to do with the property after ten years – does the town sell it, or do something else. She then asked if there has been a decision at some level that the facility will continue to be a community center, and the garage can no longer be used for public works. **Chair Miller** said that the decision was been made that the community center will be a community center, but the garage is adjacent, and different. **Ms. Laurenitis** then asked if it was the Board's understanding that the facility will stay a community center; **Chair Miller** said that the Recreation Committee would not have spent all that Isabelle Miller money on the facility if they thought it would be temporary. **Mr. Byk** said that he didn't think that there was ever a ten-year plan.

**Leslie Lewis** said that she thought that DPW is currently using the garage; **Mr. Byk** responded that it is being used for incidental light storage, and those materials could be moved anywhere. **Ms. Lewis** then asked about the GAR Hall which had been used as a kind of community center in the past; **Chair Miller** said that they are in the middle of a process to sell the building, and **Ms. Brenner** said that there is one responsive bidder who will shortly be making a proposal to the Select Board and Heritage Commission to put it back on the tax rolls.

**Mr. Weir** said that the only role that the 1833 Society would play is to help provide the matching grant for the overall NEA grant. He said that they have worked on these grants previously, and

have been approached to fill that role, or help maybe provide part of that match for the overall grant, and to be the nonprofit cosponsor. It would not rebound to us in any form except that we have an interest in the overall revitalization of the downtown. **Chair Miller** asked if he had a commitment from the 1833 Society to provide the match; **Mr. Weir** said that he did not, and their next meeting would not be until March 4<sup>th</sup>. **Chair Miller** said that would be after the deadline. **Mr. Weir** said that they do not think that they could provide a very large match now, because they are spending money identifying sites for the Library, but they do have an interest. **Ms. Brenner** reviewed, saying that what she has heard from **Mr. Weir** is that the 1833 Society is not in a position to go forward with the original grant. She said that this is due March 1<sup>st</sup>, and is not an easy grant to put together and submit. **Mr. Bartlett** feels that he needs to have everything in hand on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, and if anyone is going to apply for a grant, then a decision needs to be made tonight. If it will not be the grant with the 1833 Society and the Library, then perhaps this other proposal can go forward. The Board agreed that if Ms. Fitzgerald and her partners could work with **Mr. Bartlett** and present a complete application they would consider supporting it.

### Joint Select Board/Budget Committee Meeting

The Select Board was joined by Budget Committee members **Steve Jones, Leslie Lewis, Bob Lambert** and **Gordon Kemp**.

#### Recreation Department

	FY 2012	FY 2013	% Inc. or Dec.
Net Operating	\$382,985	\$377,174	-1.5%
Net Capital	\$0	\$32,000	100%
Net Special Articles	\$0	\$0	0%
To be raised through taxation	\$382,985	\$1,645,559	10.8%

**Mr. King** said that the Recreation Department's operating budget is down 1.2%, making this the fourth consecutive year that the proposed budget has been down. There are some increases, most noticeably the pool bond and some capital items that are driving the increase. He said that they are proposing to repave the office parking lot. They have \$13,000 to replace the bleachers because none of them are up to code. They are also looking to establish a vehicle and equipment capital reserve fund. Maintenance staff has done a good job over the last couple of years and the equipment is in good shape and relatively new. If they are able to put a little away every year, it will be there when it is needed. **Ms. Lewis** said that she has noticed that water and sewer was over quite a bit, and wondered if he expected the same next year. **Mr. King** said that last year was a very hot dry summer, and the pool got a lot of use. He said that he anticipates that they may go over again this year because of the rate change which was unbudgeted.

#### Recreation Revolving Fund

**Mr. King** said that this fund has worked well over the years. It allows the Recreation Department to offer new programs and try new things without adding to the requested appropriation every year. It helps to provide for the needed infrastructure including equipment for the community center. **Ms. Lewis** asked what percentage of the Revolving Fund is used on the Community Center; **Mr. King** said that he couldn't give an exact percentage because there are still some journal entries to do. **Ms. Lewis** said that \$170,000 has been spent on the Community Center so far this year, and asked if that had all come from the Revolving Fund; **Mr. King** said that it didn't, the Recreation Committee had allocated up to \$150,000 from the Isabelle Miller fund, and the bills came in at

\$144,000. He said that they also received two grants from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation for architecture services and the remodeling the kitchen. **Ms. Lewis** asked if the community center was being used for the Senior Lunch program; **Mr. King** said that the Senior Lunch program started in November right before Thanksgiving, and it is doing well.

### Finance Department

	FY 2012	FY 2013	% Inc. or Dec.
Net Operating	\$221,243	\$181,736	-17.9
Net Special Articles	\$0	\$50,000	100%
To be raised through taxation	\$221,243	\$231,736	4.7%

**Ms. Vaihinger** said that operating is down 1.9% with most costs dropping or remaining flat. There is an 11% increase in health insurance. The other big expenditure is in the proposed transfer to a capital reserve fund for a new financial software package. The current package runs on a very old Linux system. A major part of this cost is the tax package which will cost \$135,000. She said that she has worked with the City of Keene, and if Peterborough is able to make the purchase with Keene in 2014 then we will be able to save \$57,000. **Ms. Lewis** asked how long is this package expected to stay viable; **Ms. Vaihinger** said that they do not have to buy another package or pay for an upgrade; that will be covered by the maintenance agreement; the cost is primarily in converting the data from Unix to Windows. **Ms. Vaihinger** then addressed revenues, saying that overall revenues are down, though interest, penalties and the land use change tax revenue is expected to go up. Flood control was cut from \$35,000 to \$7,544. **Ms. Brenner** said that the town has been receiving that \$35,000 since 1944 when the MacDowell Dam was completed and land was flooded.

### Other General Government

	FY 2012	FY 2013	% Inc. or Dec.
Net Operating	\$132,437	\$141,320	6.7%
To be raised through taxation	\$132,437	\$141,320	6.7%

There were no questions or comments about this budget.

### Debt Service

	FY 2012	FY 2013	% Inc. or Dec.
Net Operating	\$149,989	\$197,049	31.4%
Net Capital	\$14,000	\$0	-100%
To be raised through taxation	\$163,989	\$197,049	20.2%

**Ms. Vaihinger** said that most of this budget is TIF District transfers for bond payments.

### Human Services

	FY 2012	FY 2013	% Inc. or Dec.
Net Operating	\$151,249	\$157,389	4.1%
To be raised through taxation	\$151,249	\$157,389	4.1%

**Ms. MacStay** said that the only increases in this budget are the lines related to a portion of her benefits. The direct relief budget remains flat. **Ms. Brenner** noted that this budget is offset indirectly by programs such as the Keep Peterborough Warm fund. **Ms. MacStay** added that other programs such as the Human Services Fund and the River Center and the many programs there are also very helpful for many needy families in Peterborough.

**Ms. Brenner** said that the budget overview is scheduled for February 21<sup>st</sup>. At that time there will be a discussion of a proposed 3.5% merit increase and a presentation on the Ambulance Transfer program. She also reminded everyone present that tomorrow night is the School District Deliberative Session. Chief Guinard and Craig Hicks will be doing a presentation on the School Resource Officer.

**Review and Approval of the Minutes of November 15, 2011**

**Motion:**

**Chair Miller** made a motion to approve the minutes of November 15, 2011 as presented; **Ms. Thomas** seconded.

**Vote:**

**Chair Miller, Ms. Thomas** and **Mr. Byk** voted in favor of the motion; the motion carried.

As there was no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:22pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nicole MacStay, Assistant to the Town Administrator

PETERBOROUGH  
SELECT BOARD:

  
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Barbara A. Miller, Chair

  
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Joe Byk

  
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Elizabeth M. Thomas

**ACTION ITEM PENDING LIST**

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