

Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 6, 2003

Attendance: Ada Brown, Chairman; Betty McDermott; Charles Leavitt; Dana Desjardins; Christine McClellan; Michael O'Donnell, O'Donnell Associates contract assessor; Amanda Simpson, Assessor's Assistant; Jack Cooper, Code Enforcement Officer; and Don Willard, Town Manager.

1. Call to order. Ada Brown called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm at the Town Office.

2. Consideration of minutes dated:

a. April 15, 2003

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to approve the Minutes as written. Seconded by Dana Desjardins.

VOTE: Unanimous.

3. 2003 Certified Assessment Ratio discussion – Assessor's Agent Michael O'Donnell.

DISCUSSION: Mr. O'Donnell said that a town's ratio is based on the State's certified assessment of value. The State ratio for 2003-2003 was 80%. A town can use 10% over or under the State's assessment. He suggested the town adopting 88%. He said that it was wise to keep the value high because it affected the Homestead exemption and other exemptions. It also affects the amount of money personal property taxes are charged to companies like Central Maine Power.

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to approve the assessment ration of 88% as recommended by Michael O'Donnell. Seconded by Charles Leavitt.

DISCUSSION: There was discussion of our revaluation and what it will do for Raymond in the future. Mr. O'Donnell said that this equalization is a good idea.

VOTE: Unanimous.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

DISCUSSION: Mr. O'Donnell reported that new legislation has been passed which will affect some property owners. The Homestead exemption starts at \$7,000 and the town's assessed percentage is deducted from the assessed valuation. Now it will be dependent on the total valuation but allotted to different amounts of valuation. Statewide homesteads up to \$125,000 get the whole \$7,000. However in Raymond only homesteads under \$110,000 valuation will get the \$7,000 exemption. From \$110,000 to \$220,000 the exemption will be \$4,400; and \$220,000 and over \$2,200. These exemptions don't necessarily affect the mil rate. Mrs. Brown asked if the State would be dissolving the homestead program. Mr. O'Donnell replied that the Legislature created it and could do away with it. He felt that the real expense to this change was the staff time in explaining to people how it works and why they don't have the exemption they had the previous year. He said advertising in the Roadrunner and other articles would help.

4. Junkyard review and recommendations – Code Enforcement Officer Jack Cooper.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Cooper explained that these proposed changes were in addition to the changes made last year. These changes involve shipping/storage containers. Mr. Willard

asked what the situation was with our current junkyards. Mr. Cooper replied that complaints are still coming in about 41 Main Street but at this time it is in compliance with our current ordinance. He noted that the trailers at 41 Main Street are registered. He said that this proposed ordinance change could be given to the Planning Board for their review and consideration to be sent to a town meeting in the future. He said that the junkyard on Shaker Woods Road is of considerable size and that they are slowly cleaning it up. However, the junkyard on Raymond Hill Road is growing in size and they didn't attend their court appearance which left it won by the Town by default. At this point the court will enforce the clean up with an action of contempt of court if they don't.

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned to send the proposed ordinance change to the Planning Board for their review. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: Unanimous.

DISCUSISON: Mr. Lindsay said that he had tried to comply with the town's ordinance and was presently painting the house in order to sell it.

5. Review of Revaluation Proposals and discussion of interview process.

DISCUSSION: Mr. O'Donnell announced that his company would be withdrawing their RFP from the submissions. He said that he would be willing to answer questions but said that his company felt with other competent companies submitting RFP's, his company felt it was time to stop doing Raymond's work. He said with their present workload that their company would not be able to get the job done in one year. He also said that he has been doing most of Raymond's work which takes him away from his other duties more than other towns do. He said that he would be available to work for Raymond through the commitment time which would be beyond their contract date which expires June 30, 2003. There was discussion of the RFP criteria. Mr. O'Donnell said that O'Donnell Associates would do the revaluation if there were no other options for Raymond because of their long time association with the town. He added that they would need two years to complete this work. Mr. Willard complimented Mr. O'Donnell on the work that he has done for the town. Mr. Leavitt also thanked Mr. O'Donnell for his time and information to the Selectmen over the past eight years. He appreciated his candor and integrity. Mrs. Brown agreed saying that the relationship has been a good one.

Amanda Simpson asked that the Selectmen appointment an interview committee to pick the candidate for the revaluation. She suggested that the interviews be done in executive session. She recommended that the committee be two Selectmen, Don Willard, Kevin Woodbrey, herself, and one other assessor from another Maine town who has no ties with any of the candidates. She continued that the interviews were set for Tuesday, May 13, 2003 beginning at 5:00 pm for Cole, Layer, & Trumble and 6:00 pm for Vision Technology. Ms. Simpson noted that the technology representative was necessary because the work to be done should be fully integrated with all our technological resources. Mrs. Brown asked Christine McClellan and Charles Leavitt to be the two Selectmen. They agreed.

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to appoint the interview committee as suggested by Ms. Simpson. Seconded by Dana Desjardins.

VOTE: Unanimous.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Simpson noted that information is in their mail boxes and she would entertain any questions they may have. She said that she has asked that each company should have in attendance at the interviews the project manager who would be working in Raymond. She asked for a focus to be on information about a current job being done in a comparable town and also a sample contract. She said that she expected a contract to be signed by June 1st and each company has said they could begin work by that time the revaluation to be completed by commitment time in 2004. Mr. Willard expressed his appreciation of Ms. Simpson in helping to write the RFP and her involvement in the process.

6. Final approval – Appointment Protocol and Code of Ethics.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Leavitt felt this was necessary in order to have everyone aware of the potential for a perception of conflict of interest. He said the intent was not to dissuade volunteerism. He felt that this protocol would help to govern these decisions.

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned to approve and adopt the Appointment Protocol and Code of Ethics. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: Unanimous.

7. Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency proposed Regional Disaster Aide Agreement for consideration and approval.

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to authorize Don Willard to sign the Agreement for the Selectmen. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: Unanimous.

8. Town Office Asbestos Abatement Project – Request for additional payment – Abatement Professionals, Inc.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Willard explained that the asbestos abatement was done by Abatement Professionals, Inc. and was overtime and caused added expense to the town. In their contract there was provision to reserve funds for causes such as these. The town withheld \$1,000 from the final payment and the company wants to collect that amount. Mr. Willard said that he had offered \$500 which Abatement Professionals denied and Mr. Rickert asked for \$900 which Mr. Willard wasn't prepared to pay. Mrs. Brown felt they should not get more than \$500 and see what transpires. Mr. Leavitt said that to finalize the job Raymond needs to signed release from Abatement Professionals. Mr. Willard continued that Raymond is not obliged to give them anything further.

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to pay Abatements Professionals, Inc. \$500 to settle this account. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

NOTE: Charles Leavitt recused himself from this vote.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Leavitt said that Mr. Willard was correct and that the entire project with all that happened was well documented. He said that they are a well known contractor who didn't expedite their contract. He felt that everything was above board in the process with the company. He added that the town had been caused to spend extra funds for non-performance. He noted that the DEP inspections failed twice before it was passed.

VOTE: 3 in favor (Brown, McDermott, McClellan) 1 opposed (Desjardins) 1 abstention (Leavitt)

9. Communications and other business.

a. Selectmen's workshop Thursday, May 15, 2003

This will be a workshop to prepare for Town Meeting to be held at the Town Office at 5:00 pm.

b. School and Town budget meeting Thursday, May 8, 2003

This will be a public meeting to discuss the town budgets to be held at Raymond Elementary School at 7:00 pm.

c. Town Meeting turnout.

Mr. Leavitt noted that with the number of registered voters in the Town of Raymond we should see a great many more people attending town meeting than in the past.

Mrs. Lester added that the Town Elections would be Friday, May 16th from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm at Jordan-Small School and the Town Meeting will be Saturday, May 17th beginning at 10:00 am at Jordan-Small. She added that absentee ballots were available at the Town Office for the election.

10. Review and authorize May 6, 2003 Treasurer's Warrant.

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to approve the Treasurer's Warrant in the amount of \$237,583.87. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: Unanimous.

11. Adjourn

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Betty McDermott.

VOTE: Unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT: Ada Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:41 pm.

Louise H. Lester
Town Clerk