

Town of Raymond
401 Webbs Mills Road
Raymond, Maine 04071
207-655-4742

Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 21, 2004

Members present: Ada Brown, Vice Chairman; Mike Reynolds; Christine McClellan; and Mark Gendron.

Members absent: Betty McDermott

Staff present: Don Willard, Town Manager; Amanda Simpson, Assessors' Agent; and Gregory Cunningham, town attorney, of Bernstein, Shur, Nelson, and Sawyer.

Others present: Charles Leavitt; Dana Desjardins

1. Call to order. Ada Brown, Vice Chairman, opened the meeting at 6:14 pm at the Town Office.

2. Consideration of previous minutes dated September 7, 2004.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to accept the minutes of September 7, 2004 as written. Seconded by Mike Reynolds.

VOTE: Unanimous.

3. Executive Session – Land Use Legal.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to go into executive session for a legal land use discussion. Seconded by Mike Reynolds.

VOTE: Unanimous.

RECESS: Ada Brown recessed the meeting at 6:15 pm.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to come back into session out of executive session. Seconded Mark Gendron.

VOTE: Unanimous.

RE-OPEN MEETING: Ada Brown called the regular meeting back into session at 7:36 pm.

4. Formation Local Board of Assessment Review – Special Town Meeting consideration – Assessors' Agent Amanda Simpson, CMA, AICP.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Willard said that Amanda Simpson suggested this be done last spring but it wasn't put on the Annual Town Meeting warrant. He added that he would like to have a local board for the review of assessments and appeals on assessments. He thought that there would probably be five people who would be appointed by the Board of

Selectmen. This is authorized under Maine law. He felt that this would bring assessment reviews under local control rather than going to the County Commissioners.

MOTION: Mike Reynolds motioned to bring to the October 14th Special Town Meeting this issue of creating a Board of Assessment Review. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Gendron asked if after the revaluation there would be meetings to discuss the revaluation with Vision Appraisal. Ms. Simpson said that there will be informal meetings with Vision and then possibly some formal hearings after that. Taxes will be committed and after that any abatements would come to the Board of Assessment Review. This would replace the use of the Cumberland County Commissioners for hearing these appeals. Mr. Willard noted that this format is becoming more accepted throughout Maine. Ms. Simpson added that a local board would know more about what local assessing practices would be. The board would be a volunteer board. Charles Leavitt said that the representation by the County Commissioners is given as a service for our County tax. He felt that the Commissioners have been fair and impartial and have a more broad view of the county and its values. I feel that the town assessor is our local component and that a local board might have a political aspect which the commissioners might not have. He didn't feel that there was a need to make a change. He also felt that adding articles to this special town meeting is taking away from the Comprehensive Plan article. Mrs. Brown stated that the people of Raymond are aware of what the Comprehensive Plan is and these articles won't detract from it.

VOTE: Unanimous.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Willard wanted everyone to be sure that there is no fault found with the County Commissioners but felt that this change was a natural progression for the town.

5. 2004-2005 Tax Commitment for approval and signature – Assessors' Agent Amanda Simpson, CMA, AICP.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Simpson passed out a packet on the commitment process. She said that she had been working with Don Willard and Elizabeth Cummings to establish the mil rate and provided a high and low scenario. She added that the state revenue sharing was the same as last year. The 18.75 amount has a larger overlay than the 18.70. Mrs. Brown asked what the Homestead exemption would be. Ms. Simpson explained that the three tiered schedule which has dropped off from past years because of our valuation. The 18.70 value has an overlay of \$24,600, which will cover abatements or uncollected taxes and \$47,500 at the 18.75 level. Mrs. Brown asked if Ms. Simpson felt that \$24,600 was enough. Ms. Simpson said that she didn't feel uncomfortable at that level. Mr. Willard said that the town's fund balance is strong enough so that unless there was a catastrophic abatement Raymond could cover it. It was discussed that the overlay in itself is a separate bookkeeping area in order to cover unpaid taxes or abatements of taxes.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to set the mil rate at 18.70. Seconded by Mark Gendron.

VOTE: Unanimous.

Mrs. Brown asked how the revaluation was going. Ms. Simpson said that there have been no complaints at all and felt that Vision Appraisal was doing an exemplary job.

NOTE: The Board of Selectmen signed the commitment papers for 2004-2005.

6. Acceptance Tassel Top Board of Directors resignation Linda Morin.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Willard informed the Selectmen that Mrs. Morin has moved from Raymond and has tendered her resignation from the Tassel Top Board of Directors.

MOTION: Mark Gendron motioned to accept her resignation. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: Unanimous.

7. Selectmen recommendation of Town of Raymond Comprehensive Plan 2004.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to recommend the 2004 Comprehensive Plan article in the Special Town Meeting Warrant. Seconded by Mark Gendron.

VOTE: Unanimous.

8. October 14, 2004 Special Town Meeting Warrant for signature.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to sign the warrant for the October 14, 2004 Special Town Meeting. Seconded by Mike Reynolds.

VOTE: Unanimous.

NOTE: The Selectmen signed the warrant.

9. 2004 Maine Municipal Association Annual Convention voting Delegate Credentials – Town Manager Don Willard and Town Clerk Louise Lester.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Willard suggested that the Town Manager and Town Clerk be appointed voting delegates at the 2004 Maine Municipal Association Annual Meeting on October 6, 2004.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to appoint Don Willard, Town Manager, and Louise Lester, Town Clerk as our voting delegates at the 2004 MMA Convention. Seconded by Mark Gendron.

VOTE: Unanimous.

10. Communications and other business.

a. Special Town Meeting Announcement.

Mr. Willard reminded everyone that there would be a Special Town Meeting for consideration of the Comprehensive Plan and other items on Thursday, October 14, 2004 at 7:00 pm at the Jordan-Small Middle School.

b. Budget/Finance Committee meeting.

Mr. Willard informed the Selectmen that there had been a Budget/Finance Committee meeting on September 20th to discuss the Palesky Initiative; information of which they received from me and which I'm giving you. This will be put on our website and linked to pertinent other sites.

Mrs. Brown recognized Charles Leavitt.

Mr. Leavitt asked if the Dacey abatement finding was going to come before the Selectmen tonight. Mr. Willard said a memo would be going out. Mr. Leavitt said that the decision of appointing a Board of Assessment Review and not using the County Commissioners showed that possibly the viewpoint of the Selectmen was slanted because they were disagreed with by the County Commissioners. Mr. Willard said that a local board can and usually is objective in these matters. He felt that this board would be totally non-political. Mrs. Brown asked why the Selectmen didn't have the results of the ruling on Dacey. Mr. Willard said that it arrived a couple of days ago, and it was to go to the Selectmen with a memo. Mr. Gendron said that he didn't have any background on this issue and didn't want to discuss it until the Board knows more. Mr. Willard said that at this point this isn't an agenda item.

Mr. Leavitt noted that last spring the School Department received notice that the middle school gymnasium chimney was out of compliance. Mr. Leavitt had a letter saying that the chimney is still out of compliance even after having work done on it. He felt that the Selectmen might want to know why the chimney hasn't been fixed to make it compliant.

11. Review and authorize Payroll and Treasurer's Warrants dated September 21, 2004.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to approve the Payroll Warrant dated September 21, 2004 in the amount of \$38,975.59. Seconded by Mike Reynolds.

VOTE: Unanimous.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to approve the Treasurer's Warrant in the amount of \$188,876.35. Seconded by Mark Gendron.

VOTE: Unanimous.

12. Adjourn.

MOTION: Mike Reynolds motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: Unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT: Ada Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:27 pm.

Louise H. Lester
Town Clerk