

-- APPROVED --
BRUNSWICK TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
JANUARY 14, 2002
SPECIAL MEETING
7:30 P.M.
MUNICIPAL MEETING FACILITY

6:45 p.m. – Executive Session regarding sale of property and possible purchase of property.

Councilor Rice moved, Councilor Galloupe seconded, to go into executive session to discuss the sale of property and possible purchase of property. The motion carried with seven (7) yeas. Councilors Watson and Randolph arrived after the vote.

7:30 P.M. Chair Priest called the meeting to order and asked for the Pledge to the Flag.

Councilors Present. W. David Watson, Jacqueline A. Sartoris, Robert A. Galloupe, Douglas A. Rice, Charles R. Priest, Nancy E. Randolph, Forrest Lowe, Thomas E. Crimmins and Stephen H. McCausland.

Others Present: Donald Gerrish, Town Manager; Fran Smith, Town Clerk; Theo Holtwijk, Director of Planning and Development; Geoffrey Hole, Town Attorney; Timothy Young, Police Commander; John Foster, Public Works Director; several citizens, members of the press and TV Video Crew.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: January 7, 2002

Councilor Randolph moved, Councilor Watson seconded, to approve the minutes of January 7, 2002. The motion carried with nine (9) yeas.

Correspondence:

Councilor Randolph acknowledged letters she received from Marcy Burnell and Judy White regarding the Mere Point boat launching issue. She responded to them and indicated she would put them on any notification list.

Manager's Report:

1. Financial Update

Mr. Gerrish said the town is half way through the fiscal year. Revenues continue to be okay and the good news is the major cash items are in good shape. Excise tax is above where it was projected to be. State revenues are where the town predicted they would be. Department Heads are managing expenditures well.

2. Update on Chamberlain Statue

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This item will be taken up at the next meeting since Dick Morrell was unable to attend this tonight's meeting.

3. Rebound Program – Grant for Police

Commander Young discussed the rebound program and the grant the town has received. Future funding for the program is not expected to come from town funds.

(A copy of a description of the proposal will be attached to the official minutes.)

Councilor Crimmins moved, Councilor Watson seconded, to accept the grant for the Rebound Program in the amount of fourteen thousand three hundred fifty dollars (\$14,350). The motion carried with nine (9) yeas.

4. Housing Needs Assessment (BHA)

John Hodge, Executive Director of Brunswick Housing Authority, outlined the proposal to do a housing needs assessment in Brunswick. The Community Housing Group is requesting that the town assist in the funding of the study in the amount of twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2,500).

(A copy of a memo from Mr. Hodge explaining the study and a draft of proposal on the study will be attached to the official minutes.)

Councilor Crimmins asked if this study was “jumping the gun” since the Navy is going to do its own study and Representative Gerzofsky talked about the legislature doing a similar sort of thing. He would like to see what the Navy's proposal is and what the state comes up with first before moving forward on the Housing Needs Assessment project.

Mr. Hodge said the Navy's study will not be comprehensive and only looks at the needs of their people. As far as Representative Gerzofsky's statement, it was in regard to possible funds for technical support available from the state legislature through a bond issue. He has asked the Navy to assist in funding his study, but they have already moved forward with theirs.

Councilor Sartoris indicated she would like to see an estimate of the number of people who commute to Brunswick since they are unable to find affordable housing here. She expressed an interest in being in the Community Housing Group, but could not make the scheduled meetings.

Councilor Rice volunteered to be on the Community Housing Group as the Council representative.

Councilor McCausland moved, Councilor Lowe seconded, to have the Council support the study, to have the town work with the group and when the final proposal is to set have the Committee come back to the Council for funding at that time. The motion carried with eight (8) yeas. Opposed was Councilor Crimmins.

5. Council Workshops

The Council will be holding potential workshops on the following dates: January 28, February 11, February 25, March 11, March 25, April 8, April 22 and April 29, 2002.

6. E-mail Use

Geoff Hole, Town Attorney, after reading from the Right to Know Law, indicated that e-mails are public records when the Council is communicating amongst themselves. It is important that the Council not form any consensus via e-mail since that would be outside of a public proceeding.

Adjustments to Agenda: None

5. The Town Council will discuss the S-Curve improvements on River Road and will take any appropriate action.

Mr. Gerrish explained the history of this project.

(A copy of his explanation will be attached to the official minutes.)

John Foster, Public Works Director, gave an overview of the project using a sketch of the proposed S-Curve.

Councilors Rice and Crimmins said they had received several calls from citizens who felt there had not been enough notice of this meeting and they would like a public meeting set for the Council next meeting.

Councilor Rice moved, Councilor Randolph seconded, to set a public meeting for January 22, 2002, to receive public comments and to discuss the S-Curve improvements on River Road. The motion carried with nine (9) yeas.

6. The Town Council will discuss the Maine Service Center Coalition's proposal for the Debt Avoidance Act, and will take any appropriate action.

Mr. Gerrish explained the proposal for the Debt Avoidance Act.

(A copy of Mr. Gerrish's comments, a letter from the Maine Service Centers Coalition, and the Debt Avoidance Act proposal will be attached to the official minutes.)

Chair Priest asked about the constitutionality of this tax since the U.S. Constitution gives the power of taxation to the state – not local government.

Mr. Gerrish said this would still be a state tax, but it would go back to the town.

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Councilors Lowe said he would be interested in exploring this option since it has a referendum provision and is project specific. He would like a letter of support for this proposal.

Councilors Randolph and Crimmins said they would not support this proposal. Businesses are already burdened and sales would go elsewhere if this tax were to become effective.

Councilor Sartoris said she viewed this proposal an option that Brunswick may or may not use in the future. She will support this as an option, especially with the project specific aspect of it. She would like the letter to include the town's concerns about property taxes and the fact they are regressive.

Councilors Galloupe, Rice and Priest supported having this option since it had a referendum provision.

Councilor Lowe moved, Councilor Rice seconded, to write a letter to the legislative committee considering this matter to indicate the Council's support of the Debt Avoidance Act due to the limited resources that a town has to generate revenue, and the ability this would have to provide another possible option. The motion carried with six (6) yeas. Opposed were Councilors Watson, Randolph, and Crimmins.

- 7. The Town Council will discuss a process to provide information to the public concerning the proposed boat launching facility on Mere Point and will take any appropriate action.**

Councilor Sartoris discussed letters she had received from residents with their concerns about having enough input and expressing an interest in participating in the development process. People want to be informed about meetings on this matter. She would like to see a citizen advisory group established, and there should be notification via e-mail and regular mail. She wants formal citizen input in the state and town planning process.

Mr. Gerrish suggested a website to provide information. He noted, however, there would be a cost in terms of development and staff time to maintain it.

Councilor Randolph said she also wanted e-mail used to get out notices.

Councilor Crimmins said the Cable TV station would be another source to get information out.

Councilor Lowe said it was premature to set up an advisory committee since the property had not even been purchased yet, plus development will take awhile. He would endorse a strong committee representing the town when development begins. He supported the idea of the website. E-mail can be problematic, and citizens do have some responsibility to keep themselves informed.

Councilor Randolph moved, Councilor Sartoris seconded, to provide information on the Mere Point boat launch through a website, along with notification to those interested through e-mail and regular mail, and the creation of an advisory committee.

Councilor Randolph withdrew her motion and Councilor Sartoris agreed.

Councilor Sartoris moved, Councilor Randolph seconded, to support the creation of a website by the town to inform people of meetings and other information regarding the Mere Point boat launch, and to express support for an advisory committee if and when the development of the site begins. The motion carried with nine (9) yeas.

It was pointed out that the Cable TV station would also provide information on this matter to the public.

- 8. The Town Council will consider giving authority to the Marine Resource Committee to open and close the Town's clam flats, and will take any appropriate action.**

Mr. Gerrish said this item would give the annual authority to the Marine Resource Committee to open and close the clam flats. Council has given this authority to the Committee the last two years. The Committee is required to report to the Council when they do make a decision concerning the opening or closing of a flat.

Councilor Watson moved, Councilor Sartoris seconded, to assign authority for opening and closing the town's clam flats to the Marine Resource Committee. The motion carried with nine (9) yeas.

- 9. The Town Council will consider a request from Verizon for a pole permit on Hacker Road, and will take any appropriate action.**

Councilor Sartoris said this location, which is for one home and quite a distance from the existing pole, may have been a perfect situation for having the line go underground.

Councilor Sartoris moved, Councilor Randolph seconded, to approve the request from Verizon for a pole permit on Hacker Road, and to have a cost estimate prepared for the cost of placing utilities underground versus above ground. The motion carried with nine (9) yeas.

(A copy of the permit will be attached to the official minutes.)

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM. A TAPE RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE AT THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS.

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Frances M. Smith
Town Clerk
January 18, 2002

January 22, 2002

Date of Approval

Council Chair