

**APPROVED 10/22/2009**

At 6:05 pm the Board's meeting was called to order by Brett Hunter in the basement meeting room at the Fremont Town Hall. Present were Selectmen Brett Hunter and Greta St Germain; Town Administrator Heidi Carlson; and the Town's contracted Auditor Paul Mercier.

Mercier came to the meeting this evening to review with the Board the 2008 Audit Report for the Town of Fremont. He began by reviewing the report from back to front. He explained that there are really three sections to the report. The first section includes accrual basis and include fixed assets and long-term debt. He said the surplus may be different here because it will include accumulated long-term payroll benefits.

He referred to pages 27-29. These exhibits take you back to the more familiar Town forms (MS-2 and MS-4) to see where appropriation lines are over- and under-spent. He said this data relates back to the Town's books, payables and monthly budget reports.

He then referred to the Balance Sheet on page 4, which is a snapshot of where the Town was on 12/31/08. He reviewed these numbers with the Board.

He reviewed the Intergovernmental Payables which includes the balance remaining to be paid to the School District for their fiscal year (through June 30, 2009).

The Unreserved Fund Balance of \$591,995 is what is available to reduce taxes. This is shown on page 25 of the report.

Mercier discussed the Unreserved Fund Balance amount as the Town's bottom line, which can be used in the tax rate setting process. He said you do not want this to get too low, that you would want to keep it and have it in the case of an emergency. There was discussion about the minimum recommendations from DRA at the tax rate setting.

He said that the Exhibit on page 4 depicts Current Assets and Current Liabilities. The \$591,995 Unreserved Fund Balance is the difference between cash on hand and taxes receivable (\$4,009,316) and the Liabilities and Fund Balances (\$3,417,321). If we collect all of our receivables, this is actual fund balance on hand. A conservative amount has been set aside for receivables and includes such amounts as taxes which may never be collected (and thus add to the Town's revenues).

Mercier said from an audit standpoint, we want to project what the Town's surplus is, but want to be conservative and not overly optimistic. He said to arrive at this, one looks at the outstanding taxes at the end of the year, and allows for tax accounts that are in bankruptcy or accounts that are in arrears three full years of property taxes.

On Page 18 at the bottom, you can see what makes up the \$948,081 in accounts receivable, broken down by year of tax levy and lien year. This includes reserve for older, non-current taxes. The older taxes are valued down so that the Balance Sheet is more conservative

There was discussion about the DRA recommended minimums for Fund Balance and the percentages of retainage. For the past few years the Town has used \$25,000 of the Unreserved Fund Balance to offset taxes.

The School budget report (within the 2008 Annual Town Report) was also reviewed to see what number may have been included as their return to the general fund balance. It was indicated in the 2009 budget reports that the School District turned back \$136,000 at their fiscal year end, which goes to offset taxes.

Mercier explained that overlay is an allowance for taxes you may not collect. This is an add-on amount at the time of setting of the tax rate. For the past several years in Fremont, aside from 2005 for the revaluation, the Town has used \$15,000 for overlay. This has been a consistent number and allows for the abatements which may be granted through the year (thus taxes that will not be collected. Carlson explained that the Town is very conservative about the revenue filings on MS-4 so that the tax rate is as accurate as possible and is not over or underinflated.

Mercier said that overall, on an accrual basis, the Town took in \$20,000 more than we had planned and spent \$38,000 less than was appropriated.

St Germain asked about Mercier's thoughts on how not funding capital reserves will hurt us. He said it is a way to plan for equipment that will depreciate over time. He said that if you are following a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), there is a planned place for expenditures as well as how you might save for them. He said that some people would rather pay for something than pay interest on a loan. This is made easier by CRF savings. He said in the end it is a managerial decision how it is done. He said that needs might change over time; and a piece of the budget is always going to be depreciation on the equipment you have.

Selectmen said that we are an organization that is always going to be here, and we need to maintain equipment and roads. There was a review of the Capital Reserve articles and what the possible issues will be in the future if they are not funded.

There was discussion about the Cemetery Perpetual Care Funds and how they could be used to fund some of the expenses in the particular cemetery. He also reviewed the Trust Funds report with the Board.

Mercier said that the General Ledger needs to be cleared out and get balances set up at the beginning of the year and that would make the whole process easier. This needs to be reviewed with NEMRC software support personnel, to see if additional training might be available.

Road Agent Guerwood Holmes came into the meeting at 6:55 pm.

There was additional discussion about accounting software and how to improve upon what was in place. The numbers are good, but Mercier said the GL system being more operation would be helpful.

Selectmen thanked Mercier for coming and he left the meeting at 7:00 pm.

At 7:00 pm Department Head Guerwood Holmes came up to the table. He was asked what type of projects he had done this week. He said that a culvert on Sandown Road near house #197 (at the ditchline) that was rusted out and broken, was replaced. He said that today he worked on Whittier Drive and they did some roadside and shoulder cleanup.

In response to a question about the paving estimate discussed last week, Holmes said he did not call Severino to provide an estimate on the road work. He said he felt it would cost \$300,000 to dig it out three to four feet because the base is thought to be junk and there is a lot of cost of materials; he felt that the economy is just too tough right now to make that kind of a proposal to the voters. There was further discussion about this, and how to keep moving ahead for the future. Holmes and Selectmen expressed concern about getting behind.

St Germain asked how can we take the block grant money and designate that money for specific targeted road maintenance.

Holmes said that overall general maintenance of roads is important. He again mentioned Whittier Drive, where they worked today to cut brush back within the right-of-way and shoulder work was done; where no work has been done in the 20 years since it was built. He said the shoulders build up over time, prohibiting water from shedding off the road properly. This is routine maintenance that needs to be done on a continuous basis.

Holmes agreed that there were roads that needed pavement. He mentioned Beede Hill Road and that it is an increasingly busy road.

There was discussion about the porta-toilet in follow-up to last week. Carlson said that when the unit is delivered for Bulky Day that it will stay on site. Holmes said he had heard that the Town could buy one for \$250 from Pete's Septic in Plaistow, and then pay \$35 per pump out. He thought this may be another option to save some money. This will be further investigated. Currently the one being delivered will cost \$95 per month and includes all pump outs.

Discussion then turned to what to do about planning for a future a barn. Holmes said he thought a metal building was the best way to go. He had priced this out a couple of years ago at approximately \$200,000.

There was discussion about a long-term plan for the future of the Highway Department including a building, purchase of equipment, and converting to an appointed Road Agent position.

He said that Brentwood bonded approximately \$500,000 some years ago to purchase all of their equipment at the time they transitioned from all contracted work to Town employees.

Discussion then turned to the Town of Merrimack MA, which had come up in the discussion last week. Holmes said he visited there last week and learned that the Town has 50 miles of road, four town-owned one ton dump trucks, five six-wheelers with no wing plows owned by the Town; and that they hire a big truck twice per year with wing plows to do cleanup and pushing back of bankings and such.

Fremont is comparable with approximately 50 miles of road. Holmes said there is also a lot of work involved in plowing of all of the Town parking lots and the School lots.

Holmes mentioned that Chester and Danville pay out a monthly stipend that drivers work toward. He said that they pay a stipend monthly; and if there is no snow, they still get that sum. This helps to keep drivers and equipment on a retainer of sorts. He said they work against it if it does snow.

Holmes said he had also learned this week that the Town of Danville Road Agent owns a one ton truck and the Town does not. He said the Town does not want to deal with the ownership issue. He said that Danville pays the same rates as Fremont, but he thinks the Road Agent gets paid \$20 per hour for a 40 hour week and gets more when running other trucks or equipment. There is one full-time employee and the Road Agent, who is elected. He said they also have a small shed in Danville.

St Germain commended Holmes for all of this work, and was pleased that he had connected with people and learned so much about what other towns were doing with regard to highways.

There was discussion about what other towns require for liability insurance coverage on vehicles. He said he had increased his own coverage to \$1,000,000 recently. He said he thought the Selectmen should consider this. He thought we should increase the Town's requirement, but that he did not want to make that decision, which will ultimately cost the vendors who work for the Town more.

Holmes said that the other towns indicated to him that they are also seeing budget cuts, in some places there is no overtime authorized except in the winter. In Merrimack MA they have thus far avoided layoffs.

At 8:00 pm Energy Committee members Gene Cordes, Cheryl Rowell, and Alexandra Adams came forward to discuss current happenings with the Selectmen.

Members were introduced to the newest member of the Committee, Alexandra Adams, who is a sophomore at Sanborn Regional High School.

Cordes said that our current youth are going to be the energy users for a longer period of time to come, and have been a great resource for the Committee. Cordes indicated how important it was to get them involved. Adams has also been coming to meetings with her friend Jessica, but she was unable to come this evening.

Cordes discussed how we can energize people to become involved in this important issue for our Town.

Cordes said that Adams was formerly a student at Ellis and has kept in touch with, and met with Ellis Middle School Principal Dawn Lewis, thus maintaining their connection to Ellis School. Lewis has also been a volunteer with the Energy Committee. Cordes said there was a Green Fair in February and an assembly. This may be planned again.

Cordes said that Adams has designed a poster for a penny drive to raise money for the solar panel array at the Safety Complex. This poster was viewed by all. Paul Adams, Alexandra's father joined the meeting at approximately 8:05 pm; and waited until his daughter had finished some of the discussion with the Board. They left at approximately 8:10 pm.

Cordes said that the Committee has kicked around ideas of a volunteer committee versus a commission, which is in line with the summer 2009 legislative changes. The change allows formation of a "commission" with members appointed by the Selectmen. The Energy Committee has chosen five (5) as a number of appointees.

The Committee's next meeting is Saturday November 21, 2009 at 9:00 am.

Cordes talked about getting ARRA funding for future projects, and that they are looking at engineering grants to look into renovation of the heating system at the Town Hall. The grant from Clean Air Cool Planet was received for audits and study committee work.

Carlson also indicated that the Safety Complex insulation grant is moving ahead and the work involved has been put out to bid. Bids are due November 5, 2009.

There was discussion about a geothermal system at the Town Hall and the levels of technology available. There is still an oil tank buried in the ground at the Town Hall, which also will need to be removed and potentially remediated.

The Energy Committee wants to have a meeting with Fire Chief, Police Chief, and Building Inspector and bring them up to speed on the solar array at the Safety Complex. There was discussion about either 6:00 pm some evening or 7:00 am some morning before folks head off to work. Cordes will forward an email to Carlson to be sent out to the Chiefs and Building Inspector.

With regard to grant criteria and deadlines, the solar panel array at the Complex may have to be completed prior to year end. This was considered in the bid specification.

Cordes and Rowell left the meeting at 8:40 pm.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Copies of the minutes for 08 October 2009 were distributed. They were too lengthy to be reviewed this evening, and members took copies to review and bring comments back next week.
2. Saturday is Bulky Day. Gates may be available in the morning, but Hunter and St Germain are not. Carlson indicated there were a fairly good number of volunteers signed up and that the dumpsters were primarily all on site, the balance would be brought in tomorrow.
3. Carlson had prepared an updated Ferwerda Agreement for review by the Board. It includes all of the updates as discussed last week and the conditions outlined in the Planning Board's letter of October 7, 2009. St Germain moved to approve and sign this Agreement for 2009. Hunter seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Selectmen reviewed the payroll manifest \$38,811.29 and accounts payable manifest \$28,952.91 for current week dated 16 October 2009. St Germain moved to approve the payroll manifest in the amount of \$38,811.29. Hunter seconded and the vote was approved 2-0. St Germain then moved to approve the accounts payable manifest in the amount of \$28,952.91. Hunter seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.
2. Selectmen reviewed the folder of incoming correspondence.
3. Selectmen drafted and signed outgoing correspondence to Randy & Cindy Grasso regarding the discussion last week about Beede Hill Road.
4. Selectmen reviewed and approved the November newsletter. This includes approval of the posted Thanksgiving schedule for office hours.
5. Selectmen reviewed the Garden Club's proposal for a plaque to add to the Friendship Garden sign, saying it was founded by Brande McLean in 2003. This would be a 5" x 7" plaque with green letters. The Board's only suggestion was to center it and make it three lines instead of the two which were shown in the email submission.
6. New budget proposals for 2010 were printed, circulated and discussed as follows:

### **4196 INSURANCE**

#### **001 Property Liability**

**\$35,100**

All property-liability & public officials liability insurance. Vehicle schedule: approx \$500 per vehicle - 3 police cruisers; 1 police SUV; 1 rescue truck; 1 EM vehicle; Fire Tank 1 (army 6x6); Tank 5 (Mack tanker converted); Forestry 1; Engine 1; Fire Utility Truck 2005; Highway 2005 one ton truck. AT \$1000 per actual fire truck: E1, E3, T4. Town has signed up for a multi-year rate program which results in stable rates for another 2 years (excluding new coverages); fine arts coverage on hearse and hand tub \$100.

Estimated 5% increase based on added coverages and predicted max rate increases as part of multi-year agreement.

**002 Police Liability****\$ 525**

Additional insurance for the Police Department; increased based on premium cost in 2008; anticipated inflation.

**010 Deductible****\$ 1,000**

Deductible on property-liability insurance

**TOTAL REQUEST INSURANCE \$ 36,625**

With no discussion, motion was made by St Germain to recommend \$36,625 for Insurance. Hunter seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

**4197 ADVERTISING AND REGIONAL ASSOCIATION****001 Professional Dues****\$ 6,800**

NH LGC membership estimated at \$2,950. NHLGC based on services.

Rockingham Planning Commission Dues \$3,850. RPC dues increased by \$0.03 and are based on \$0.93 per capita (4,144 population estimate used from NH Office of Energy and Planning). We underpaid the dues in 2009 based on receiving a default budget. Have again budgeted for the increase this year again.

**TOTAL REQUEST \$ 6,800**

With no discussion, St Germain moved to recommend \$6,800 for Advertising and Regional Association. Hunter seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

**4199 OTHER GENERAL GOVERNMENT****001 Town Report Printing****\$ 6,400**

Cost to print annual report. Bids being investigated to ensure that low bidder can do the work. This includes the second highest bidder amount (a known printer who has done Fremont's report in the past). The bid process will be followed through for investigation of references and awarded to the lowest responsible bidder.

The Town still mails Town Reports to all households in an effort to get the information out to every resident. This makes for a higher number of reports printed and mailed, but the Selectmen have supported, and the voters agreed (in the 2008 warrant vote) this is worth the money and effort. The Town Report is posted to the Town's website in-house by Carlson.

**002 Town Report Postage****\$ 1,100**

Number of pages in the Town Report remains fairly consistent with recent years, but there was an increase in bulk postage rates in 2008. The number of households is fairly constant. We have altered the way we do bulk mailing to save money, but it adds time and energy to the process.

**TOTAL REQUEST \$ 7,500**

With no further discussion, St Germain moved to recommend \$7,500 for Town Report (Other General Government). Hunter seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

Selectmen discussed line 4211. Police Special Detail, which was included in the Police Department budget presented by Chief Janvrin on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The Board questioned how this worked, and Carlson explained that the \$45,000 was shown as an appropriation and the same amount shown as revenue, thus no tax impact. If the money is not spent, the entire \$45,000 is still shown as a revenue, thus no tax increase.

The current budget report was reviewed, indicating that \$27,209 has already been spent to date, including the large payroll for last weekend's Grassdrags for the police details.

Motion was made by St Germain to recommend \$45,000 for Police Special Details to include details and witness fee pay. Hunter seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

#### **4414 ANIMAL CONTROL BUDGET**

|   |                   |                |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| <b>KENNEL</b>   | <b>1-4414-101</b> | <b>\$1,600</b> |
| This includes any kennel supplies needed to hold animals that are picked up running at large. This also covers an agreement with Brentwood Emergency Animal Hospital, in case of needed tranquilizer supplies or animals that need medical attention during business hours.   |                   |                |
| <b>OFFICE SUPPLIES</b>  | <b>1-4414-103</b> | <b>\$150</b>   |
| This will include supplies needed for the keeping of files and educational materials provided for public education  |                   |                |
| <b>TRAINING</b>   | <b>1-4414-201</b> | <b>\$650</b>   |
| This includes the same firearms training that is required by Police Standards and Training for a police officer, along with the yearly New England Animal Control Humane Academy held at UNH.   |                   |                |
| <b>PATROL WAGES</b>   | <b>1-4414-301</b> | <b>\$7,430</b> |
| This is budgeted at 10 hours per week. As the Town grows, so does the number of animal control calls. At this time there are over 960 licensed dogs in Fremont. In June or July each year the Animal Control Department is given a list by The Town Clerk's Office of dogs that have not been re-licensed. This year there were over 174 animals on the list. Each owner has to be contacted and brought up to compliance. This is in addition to handling any routine calls. Our Animal Control Officer has been certified as a part-time police officer. This allows her to serve and process her own arrest and summons paperwork eliminating the need for a patrol officer to do it. The pay rate is adjusted to be same as a part-time police officer. |                   |                |
| <b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>   | <b>1-4414-403</b> | <b>\$124</b>   |
| Rockingham Dispatch is our primary source of calls to the Animal Control Officer. They will page the officer instead of using a telephone. This line pays the yearly rental of a pager.   |                   |                |
| <b>EQUIPMENT</b>  | <b>1-4414-405</b> | <b>\$500</b>   |
| This line is used to replace or repair any equipment that is lost, damaged or no longer of any use  |                   |                |
| <b>VEHICLE FUEL</b>   | <b>1-4414-501</b> | <b>\$400</b>   |
| Includes all fuel for the Animal Control pickup truck.  |                   |                |
| <b>VEHICLE MAINTENANCE</b>  | <b>1-4414-601</b> | <b>\$500</b>   |
| In late fall 2003 the Board of Selectmen addressed one of the major problems with the Animal Control Department. Until then the officer had to transport the animals in his family vehicle. He did not have the   |                   |                |

necessary equipment with him most of the time. It was decided to purchase a previously owned pick up truck to be used by the Animal Control Officer. This is a limited use vehicle used by any one with the authority to enforce Animal Control Laws both State and Local. This line will be use to purchase fuel for, and maintain the vehicle

**TOTAL REQUEST ANIMAL CONTROL     \$11,446**

Selectmen reviewed this and made the following line item recommendations:

4414-101 Kennel \$1,250  
4414-103 Office Supplies \$75  
4414-201 Training \$650  
4414-301 Patrol Wages \$7,430  
4414-103 Communications \$124  
4414-405 Equipment \$300  
4414-501 Vehicle Fuel \$300  
4414-601 Vehicle Maintenance \$400

Hunter then moved to recommend a total of \$10,529 for Animal Control. St Germain seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

Selectmen then discussed the Library budget submission. The following items were discussed as possible recommendations:

4550-001 Wages \$ 53,676 – returning to the 2009 default budget without any pay increase.  
4550-002 Books CD's Videos \$17,000 – reflecting on what has been spent the past several years.  
4550-003 Office Supplies \$2,200 – reflecting on what has been spent the past several years.  
4550-004 Children's Programs \$2,000  
4550-005 Dues & Periodicals \$300  
4550-050 Computer Maintenance \$3,300  
4550-051 Computer Software & Support \$800  
4550-060 Replacement Equipment \$2,000  
4550-101 Telephones \$900  
4550-102 Electricity \$6,500  
4550-103 Furnace & Oil \$7,000  
4550-105 Building Maintenance \$6,500

Carlson will pull together some additional details on electric usage and total average number of gallons of heating fuel annually.

The Board's discussion as above results in a recommended total of \$102,176. It was decided that the recommendations made this evening by Hunter and St Germain would again be reviewed next week with Gates, and a final decision to be made at that time.

7. Selectmen reviewed and signed an abatement form voted for approval on 10/08/2009 for parcel 01-074 in the amount of \$1,150. This will be forwarded to the Tax Collector and to the homeowner.

8. Selectmen signed an updated grant MOA for the Fremont Police Department radios reprogramming. The one submitted by Chief Janvrin needed a Selectmen's authorizing signature. Hunter and St Germain signed the new form and it was returned to the Police Department for Processing.

9. Carlson discussed with the Board an email from Renee King requesting a playground Warrant Article for monies to be withdrawn from the Capital Reserve Fund. The Board requested a couple of pricing estimates and further information.

10. Selectmen reviewed an email from Keith Stanton regarding a phone conversation he reports with "Myria" from Governor Lynch's Office regarding the revaluation process. The Board discussed sending a follow-up letter to Governor Lynch's Office as well as to Director Hamilton from the Department of Revenue Administration.

11. Selectmen reviewed a request from Roy Weddleton for an abatement of 2006 property taxes for a parcel formerly owned by Allan Rislove. This parcel, currently owned by Joseph Hardacre and Jose Vinagres (94 Risloves Way Unit 1) was the subject of discussion between the Board and the Tax Collector some months ago as the unit numbers were confused by the mortgagees and Mr Rislove had not properly paid taxes, which was later billed to the present homeowner. The title company paid the taxes in the end, and have now gone to Mr Rislove for payment of those taxes.

The crux of the matter is that the deadline is long past for an abatement of taxes for tax year 2006. A letter will be drafted for Board review, to send to Attorney Weddleton in follow-up.

12. There was follow-up discussion to the storage trailers being parked in the Town right-of-way on Lyford Drive. This activity is prohibited during the time specified in the Town's Parking Ban. If the Selectmen wished to ban such parking year round, an amendment that would be town-wide, to the Parking Ordinance would need to be proposed with the required public hearings, etc.

#### **NEXT WEEK**

The next regular Board meeting will be held on Thursday October 22, 2009 at 6:00 pm. The Budget Committee meets on Wednesday October 21, 2009.

Selectman Gates arrived at 10:45 pm on his return drive from New York. He signed several documents and discussed items with the Board.

Some edits needed to be made to one of the letters, and Board members headed upstairs to sign the revised letter. They were in the Selectmen's Office on the main floor of the Town Hall.

With no further business to be conducted, motion was made by Hunter and seconded by St Germain to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 pm. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson  
Town Administrator