TILTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
Wednesday, February 15, 2017
Public Hearing to Discuss Petitioned Warrant Articles

Present: Selectmen Patricia Consentino, Selectman Katherine Dawson, Selectman Peter Fogg, Selectman Joseph Jesseman, and Selectman Jon Scanlon.

Others: Joyce Fulweiler, Town Administrator, Tim Pearson, Finance/IT Director, and Gayle Bestick, Administrative Assistant.

Public: Scott Davis, Chuck Drew, Lynn and David Fox, Chief Robert Cormier, Ashlee Saint John, Trisha Laro, Judy Tilton, Eric Pyra, Juliet Harvey, Mr. & Mrs. Tom Damon, Pat Clark, Hassan Salley, Stan Brown, and Jane Alden.

Selectman Consentino called the Public Hearing to order at 7:58 p.m. She explained Article #3 of the Town's Warrant which asks to decrease the number of Selectmen from five to three, was submitted by petition and would be on the ballot.

Selectman Consentino spoke of her reasons why she was against the petition. Selectman Jesseman stated he could see both sides, however; offered no opinion. Selectman Dawson spoke of all the things the selectmen do, and if the number of members were reduced, the workload would fall back on the Town Administrator. She said it would be a step backwards. Selectman Scanlon enjoys the diversity and differences each selectman brings to the board. He believes five is better.

Scott Davis, originator of the petition, stated he thinks there is a lot of micromanaging from the Board with the department heads at Town Hall. Scott gave an example of when Selectman Consentino had asked the Town Administrator to send a letter to Senator Jeanie Forrester - he thinks that task is something the Selectmen's secretary should be doing. Scott stated, with five selectmen, there is a greater chance of them always being in town hall.

Selectman Consentino defended the Town Administrator pointing out this is just another example of how much she is in demand; noting Joyce did speak personally with Senator Forester by phone, thanking her for her tireless efforts working with the town. Selectman Consentino further explained the Board is in and out of Town Hall attending meetings.

Lynn Fox asked what the procedure would be if the warrant passed. Selectman Consentino explained that every member of the board would be up for reelection next year, and those new members' terms would be reset.

Stan Brown voiced his concern about the political support-consolidated power, two people in a small town could have without term limits.

Mr. Davis noted as a point of order, a majority of the towns in New Hampshire have only three selectmen.
There was further discussion of the benefit of having five members, how many of them serve on other committees, and attend various meetings throughout the weeks and month.

Judy Tilton stated she believes a three member board would not adequately represent the town.

Selectman Jesseman commented it was a function of who you elect, and if you're not satisfied, come to the meetings and/or run for the position.

Judy Tilton noted with a three member board, if two of the members met for lunch and started discussing town politics for example, it could be considered "a meeting". Although those members would have to follow the ethics rules, said Lynn Fox, and it is against the law, commented Selectman Jesseman; it does happen.

Mr. Hassan Salley of Ashuelot Drive, spoke of serving on select boards, both with three and five members, even seven. He supports keeping the current number of members on the board.

With nothing further regarding Article #3, Selectman Consentino closed that discussion.

Selectman Consentino read Article #12 which was tabled from the Budget Committee hearing, regarding the $31,300 for developing a schematic design for a police station. Selectman Consentino noted the needs of the police station are not changing, but becoming more in demand. She spoke of taking the plans back to an architect for wetland studies and geotechnical investigation, then coming back next year to Town Meeting with cost items of building a new police station which would include a bond issue for 2018. Joyce Fulweiler, Town Administrator, interjected stating, included with this proposal, there would be at least two public hearings on this matter.

Scott Davis asked Chairman Consentino if there were any thought processes of splitting the departments at the PD. His suggestions were to keep the patrol staff at the current building, and looking at the old post office building on Main Street which could house administration and also the Welfare Officer. Scott thinks other options should be looked at instead of building a whole new building.

Stan Brown asked why the plan was to move to a different piece of land. Selectman Dawson replied it was less expensive. Selectman Consentino also replied it was the land which was expensive, and moving to a new location would be cost effective to the town.

Pat Clark commented we are way overdue for a new police station.

Selectman Consentino confirmed the plans are in place, they just need to be modified to fit the appropriate piece of land.

David Fox asked about Article #14, regards to Buffalo Park. Selectman Scanlon explained it was simply a name change to designate the park as a forest. If passed, it would allow the Conservation Commission to more easily apply for grants.
As author of Article #16, Terminating the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Membership, Pat Clark, being an ex-fire commissioner, explained why he raised this issue. He reported a Northfield Budget Committee member questioned why the dispatching bill for the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association (LRMFA) goes to the Towns, when it should go to the Fire Department. Mr. Clark explained the matter was brought to the Fire Commissioners and Chief Hayes, President of LRMFA, who explained the process of that change. As a result of that meeting, if the change was made, Mr. Clark reported the Tilton portion of the bill would go up approximately $7,700. Both the Towns of Northfield and Tilton would withdraw from the member agreement, and the Tilton Northfield Fire District would become the member.

Selectman Consentino recommends this matter not take place. She explained when the County no longer did the billing for LRMFA, Tilton's amount increased then, and if we send the billing to the Fire District, Tilton would be paying 66% of TN Fire District's LRMFA dispatching expenses.

Mr. Clark agrees it is a Fire Department bill, however; believes it's the right thing to do.

There was further explanation of this article simply being a "billing" matter. No services from the LRMFA would change.

Scott Davis raised the issue of the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Dispatching employees being on a Group 2 Plan which isn't fair to the communities who pay into the association. He then spoke on the fairness of being in a "district", and being fair with our neighboring towns.

Mr. Damon, referenced Article #14 asking if harvesting would be allowed and who would be in charge if there was any, also; where would the funding come from if there is cutting done. Selectman Scanlon replied the Conservation Commission has different funds available. Selectman Dawson explained if this article passed, it would allow the Conservation Committee to access money through grants, as the park would be designated a "forest". Selectman Scanlon explained the area would remain a conservation area with the specific deed restrictions.

**Adjournment:**
At 8:57 p.m., with nothing further to discuss, Selectman Consentino moved, seconded by Selectman Dawson, to adjourn. All in favor. Motion passed. Hearing adjourned.