

Cooper Select Board's Meeting
Sept. 6, 2012
Held at the Grange Hall

Attending: Ann Marie Flood, Sandra Lyon, Micah Perkins, John Viscelli, Donna Timpe, Dave Timpe, Ann Marie Flood, Ronnie Flood, Scott Jamieson, Karen Holmes, Joanne McMahon, Timmy Ketchen, Norm Howe, Jim Robinson

Starting time: 6:45 p.m.

Agenda Item 1: The Select Board reviewed and signed the Treasurer's warrant.

Agenda Item 2: The building construction account and amounts spent already were reviewed. Ann Marie explained that the amount at the bottom was what was left.

Agenda Item 3: The Tax Assessors asked to meet with the Select Board regarding a resident's tax assessment. Jim Robinson presented an abatement request. Norm explained the process, that the Select Board would need copies of tax bills, copies of deeds, and tree growth information. Brenda Gove, Assessor's agent, was not able to make it tonight. Norm said the Select Board can request this information. Or the resident, Jim Robinson, can provide it tonight. Jim spoke about the 2007 tax abatement, when he says this whole issue started in Sept. 2007. Jim says that after a meeting with the assessors he was charged for 200 feet of frontage instead of 125 ft. Jim said the tax bill for lot 17 and the tree growth lot was where this problem came from.

Norm explained that the actions that a Select Board can take in this kind of a matter. Micah said he would like to get together with the tax assessors and then mail a letter to Jim. Jim said the town already has 2 copies of the previous letter. Norm said the issue the Select Board would need information on is the deeds. Norm said he believes it is 60 days that the Select Board has to make a decision. \$2100 is the amount of abatement that Jim is looking for, and Norm asked him to bring and explain that math. Jim then explained how he figured it. Jim asked about changing the valuation. Norm said that by state law only in the current year can you change valuation, an example being if a house burns. Jim said it has already changed up or down, and he did not know why. Then Norm replied that the only way they can change the valuation is the current year. It is a requirement for the resident, Jim, to prove that he was over charged. Then Norm said it is on second and third year back that the Select Board can make the decision on. The only way the valuation can be changed is if there was an error in ownership.

Jim said the abatement paper (form) was the first one he has been given since 2007. Donna said that as she understands it, there needs to be a mistake in ownership or they can't do anything. Norm gave a copy of the laws to the Select Board. Jim said he had no problem with those present here, but he felt it was Brenda who had combined two lots back in 2007. John said they can't do anything about 2007. Jim said he knew that, but he wants what can be done, and it can be taken off the next 2 or 3 years of tax bills if we want to do that. Jim said Brenda has now got it right, and he is paying a lot less. Jim wants Brenda to admit it was wrong, and she won't.

Micah said the Select Board will clearly delineate what they need to make a determination; they will definitely follow up on this. Jim said he has been charged over 20 acres extra for all these years, he showed Micah a paper. Then Jim said his forester did make that mistake. It was not in tree growth and

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the forester thought that it was. Jim has been taxed based on that error. Norm said, yes, the Tax assessors do use that front page to do their work. Jim said Brenda and Virginia Dunkin did the next one, but Jim was not there when it was done. Jim then said he was at the meeting when they changed the tree growth. Jim said he is here tonight to prove himself right. Jim told the Select Board that Virginia Dunkin said everyone makes mistakes. Then Jim explained the various foresters he has used, and he felt none had gotten it right. Micah said he would be in touch with Norm, they will discuss this. Then Jim left the meeting.

Agenda Item 4: The building construction plans were discussed. Micah said he wanted us to review where we are at, what we have spent, and we want to watch the money because when it is gone, it gone. John reviewed what we have done so far. Ronnie was asked about the cost of the septic, and he said it will likely be about \$3,000. Then John was asked to review the masonry work. John said we are actually running a bit over the expected cost. Ann Marie said we do still have some money in the other account for the building. The foundation is about 25% under the building, so we are set for the future work on the hall itself.

Donna said the Select Board is accountable for the final result. She feels we need to focus on the actually building, we can't keep talking about the ceiling, etc. Folks will be upset if we don't have a completed building but have a fancy floor. She asked if we have an hourly amount for the workers. Sandy and Ann Marie spoke about the wage amounts we voted on at Town Meeting. Town Labor gets \$15 an hour.

Timmy said he was after the people at Androc's to get an estimate, and they did send someone out. Donna asked if there was a change in the type of heating we are going to use. Timmy explained the way baseboard zoned heating would work with some antifreeze baseboards in the hall. He said hot air can't actually be zoned. Dave asked other questions about the use of baseboard heat. Timmy explained that the baseboard heat would need to be turned on earlier in the day when it is very cold, like for a March town meeting. Which is more economical? Hot air is economical to put in, but baseboard is more economical in the long run. Micah asked about a price, realizing that it would be a moving target. Timmy said about \$25,000 for materials, and about that same amount for labor. There have been a couple of extra doors added, but it is still within the price previously quoted.

Donna said there is a fireproof box at Wal-Mart that would be big enough to hold all the stuff for Ann & Sandy instead of a fire proof room. Sandy explained the fire proof archive room idea was that a room would be cheaper than the cost of a fire proof file. A copy of the estimate of a fire proof file cabinet was shared. It was stated that an archive room would no longer be a cheaper option.

Timmy said the cost for plumbing and heating would be about \$12,000. Timmy has a bid from the guy he has used, Joey Jackson that he has not opened. He was waiting for Androx to give theirs before he opens it.

Then the wiring was discussed. Micah said he felt that Lance was going to use us good on this. When would Timmy be ready for Lance? When the building is closed in and weather tight, Timmy said. Timmy

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also said the trusses will be here next week. Timmy asked if there was approval for more money, or could we go back to the town? Donna said she feels no, we just need a shell up for now. Micah said we are all on that page. Ann Marie said by December she wants town business out of her house. Sandy said she is concerned about holding the Nov. 6 election.

The discussion went on as to how much was in the building fund from the last two annual town meetings? It is \$5,000 for 2011, and \$1,200 for 2012. Then the Select Board discussed how much they had the discussion to pay from the general fund. The archive room is out the window at this point. John continued to discuss what was expected to be done. The kitchen will be bare bones. The \$50,000 amount is a not to exceed that amount.

Timmy went back to the issue of heating. If you get the pipes run and use a different heater for a year, then put the pipes are already there so you can finish the heat the next year. Micah said let's do the math and say about \$4,000 or \$5,000 for electrical. Donna and John were writing a cost estimate using the numbers that were discussed.

Options for siding were discussed. Cedar shingles were one option, which it was agreed are preferred as a historical connection for the original building. Dave asked about roofing, and Timmy said we are using architectural shingles. Other options were discussed, as we are trying to find a way to cut the price. The question was asked if Timmy could get a better price through using the town account. It was thought not, as a contractor he is getting about 15% now, John said.

We will meet again on the 19th, and Micah will go back to Machias saving bank to see about the grants they had told him about.

It was agreed to move a window to the other wall; 3 facing the driveway, and 1 on back and a door on the back.

Agenda Item 5: The Town of Alexander has had two break-ins. They are willing to give us a guided tour and let us know what they have learned about security. It was agreed to meet there at 5:00 on the 19th. We have a meeting later that night anyway.

Agenda Item 6: Sandy needs to go to Secretary of State's elections conference this year, and it will be at Sugarloaf on the 26th and 27th of Sept.

Agenda Item 7: John began discussing the withholding of tax out of the pay for the town labor. Tim explained how he uses a guy for labor. The various ways to do this were discussed. It was stressed that the town wage for labor is \$15 an hour. Any other amount is by State wages scales, which Sandy gave John last spring. There is no way the town can pay more, only a contractor can set a different (higher) amount. John said he does not want to ask his son to work for less than his usual amount of \$20 an hour. Sandy said he would need to be paid by John or Timmy, not the town, or it would need to be \$15.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:37 p.m. Next Select Board meeting will be Sept. 19, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.