

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN  
Select Board  
16 School Street  
Allenstown, New Hampshire 03275

Minutes of Regular Meeting  
September 26, 2011

**Call to Order.**

The Allenstown Select Board Meeting for September 26, 2011 was called to order by the Chair at 6:00 p.m.

**Roll Call.**

Present on the Board: Jason Tardiff, Jeff Gryval, and Sandra McKenney

**Others Present.**

Residents of Allenstown: N/A.

Others Present: N/A.

Other Public Officials: Jerry McKenney, Trustee/Budget Committee; Carl Caporale, Budget Committee; Larry Anderson, Trustee/Budget Committee; Carol Merrill, Budget Committee; Richard Merrill, Sr., Planning Board; Donald Chaput, Budget Committee.

Allenstown Staff: Robert Martin, Fire Chief; Shaun Mulholland, Police Chief; Paul Apple, Town Administrator

**Citizens Comments.**

The Chair called for citizens' comments. There were none.

## **Public Hearing I.**

Pursuant to RSA 31:95-b, III(b), the Select Board conducted a Public Hearing to review and accept unanticipated funds from the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency, said funds representing an award for a Highway Safety Grant in the amount of \$4,950.00 for the purpose of operations related to Operation Safe Commute.

Chief Mulholland explained that Operation Safe Commute is a statewide traffic enforcement program involving the State Police and 60 other Police Departments in New Hampshire. It is completely funded by the State and provides additional traffic enforcement during the morning commute hours for 3 hours and the afternoon commute hours for 3 hours, one day per month.

Motion. Mr. Gryval moved to open the Public Hearing at approximately 6:10 p.m. Mrs. McKenney seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

Mr. Anderson asked the Chief what areas would be the focus of Operation Safe Commute. Chief Mulholland replied that they had focused mainly on Deerfield Road, River Road, and Branch Street, as well as within the School Zones. There were no further questions from the public.

The Chair stated that the Board would leave the Public Hearing open, but to move on to the next Agenda item.

## **Execute MS-1.**

Mr. Apple provided the Board with draft copies of the MS-1 as well as copies of the 2010 form as submitted. He directed their attention to the increase from 2010 to 2011 in the lines entitled "Net Valuation on Which the Tax Rate For Municipal, County & Local Education Tax Is Computed" and "Net Valuation, without Utilities, on which the Tax Rate for State Education Is Computed." The Chair asked the reason for the increase, and

Mr. Apple replied that it was based on the Sales Analysis conducted by the appraisal contractor.

Mrs. McKenney asked if changes could be made to the form once it is submitted to the Department of Revenue Administration. Mr. Apple replied that amendments were possible. The consensus of the Board was that all members wanted more detail on the comparison between the 2010 and 2011 MS-1 items, line-by-line. The Chair directed Mr. Apple to ensure Mr. Roy's attendance at the next meeting.

Mr. Apple noted further changes in the utility assessments on page 4 of the form and that the Residential Land (Improved and Unimproved) and Current Use and Conservation Restriction Assessment values had stayed roughly the same. The Retail Value of Residential Land, however, had fallen by approximately \$100,000.00 since 2010, largely due to economic conditions. .

Mr. Apple recommended that the Board execute the form so that it could be submitted before the filing deadline of October 1. He explained that the tax rate cannot be set without the form resulting in late tax bills and then cash flow issues later in the fall. Mr. Apple reported that he had spoken to Mr. Roy the preparation of the form, who had stated that the final figures were delayed because of computer issues.

The Chair stated that Mr. Roy had placed the Board in a difficult position in preparing the form without sufficient time for the Board to have an explanation regarding changing values. Mr. Tardiff stated that Mr. Roy had known for 6-8 weeks that the Board wanted to meet with Mr. Roy prior to the filing deadline to review the forms, and that Mr. Roy should have given that meeting a higher priority after Mr. Apple began trying to coordinate a meeting with Mr. Corcoran, Mr. Roy and Mr. Sansoucy regarding a tax abatement case several weeks ago.

Mr. Gryval stated that Mr. Apple's many attempts to coordinate said meeting were met with what he now feels was indifference, at worst, or unprofessionalism, at best. Mr. Tardiff recommended insisting that *someone* from the Corcoran firm attend the following Monday's Board of Selectmen meeting, lest they begin seeking a new assessing firm altogether. The Chair felt that if they still could not make the effort to get to

a meeting after 6-8 weeks of trying to accommodate their schedule, then obviously the Town's business is not a priority to Corcoran & Associates.

Mrs. McKenney suggested that a demand might be too harsh, especially since Mr. Corcoran had always done right by the Town and has done good work over their nearly 20-years of service. Mr. Tardiff pointed out that Corcoran had been late on the MS-1 every year.

Mr. Apple suggested a first approach may be to try to retain the amicable relationship. Mr. Gryval replied that he did not object to a clear demand on Corocran to attend. He stated that whether they do a fine job, the tax payers are paying for a service that they are not getting. He added that although he hates missing deadlines, the next meeting, which was scheduled for October 3, would make them just a couple of days late if they put off voting on the issue until then.

Mr. Apple repeated his concern about cash flow problems resulting from a late filing. He added that he would issue an absolute demand that someone from Corcoran attend the October 3 meeting and the Board agreed to approve the form with the understanding that it could be amended if errors were discovered.

Motion. Mrs. McKenney made a motion to approve the MS-1 for 2011. Mr. Gryval seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

The Board then signed the MS-1.

### **Consider Revised Emergency Operations Plan.**

Chief Mulholland gave a brief history of the Task Force for Emergency Operations, which began in 1986. In 2006, the EOP was revised to meet the new state model, which is called the ESF model, or Emergency Support Function model. There were additional revisions in 2010, using a grant from the state.

The Chief said that the Town is still required to follow the ESF model, but the plan is now applied using an ICS, or Incident Command System, model. He reported that the ICS model works much better for small towns such as Allentown because it requires fewer people to implement. He stated that the ICS model has been in place for almost a year now and is working very well overall.

He stated that several specific checklists have been added to the plan, which aid in ensuring that steps are not skipped or forgotten. He noted that in some instances of floods and major storms in Allentown's past, mistakes have been made; so, these new checklists have ensured that this has not happened again.

Information on the new river gauge is included in the new plan, as well as a detour plan with specific signs to detour traffic from Route 28 onto state roads rather than onto River Road in the event of flooding. River Road, he said, had been significantly damaged during the last several floods because of detour traffic.

There is also a specific evacuation plan included now which did not exist prior to the 2010 revision.

He explained how the plan is broken up into sections, and that residents and officials need not read the entire plan in order to implement the section that applies to their function.

The Board had no questions for Chief Mulholland.

Motion. Mr. Gryval made a Motion to accept the revised Emergency Operations Plan. Mrs. McKenney seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

### **Update on NFIP Training.**

Mr. Gryval asked Chief Mulholland about the NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program) training for Planning Board members, Zoning Board members, and the Select Board. The Chief responded that he was just waiting for the different boards to contact him, and indicated that he would facilitate a meeting about the training.

Mr. Gryval asked if Mr. Tardiff, as Planning Board *ex officio*, would ask the Planning Board Chair if the Planning Board were ready to do that. Mr. Gryval also directed Mr. Apple to ask the Zoning Board Chair if the Zoning Board was ready, and Mr. Apple agreed.

### **Recommendations on Assessing RFPs.**

Mr. Apple reported that the subcommittee appointed by the Select Board had met the previous Thursday and examined the bids in detail, and recommended two candidates that should be interviewed: Cross Country and MRI, both of which had bid the same price. The criteria used in making the recommendation were price, size of the firm, proximity of the firm to Allenstown, their references or client lists, their familiarity with Allenstown's software, and the general personality of the firm.

Mrs. McKenney asked whether Corcoran & Associates would also be interviewed. Mr. Apple replied that he had not required current contractors to bid because the Board is familiar with existing services and that it would be unfair to ask current contractors to bid against themselves.

Mr. Apple suggested the interviews could be conducted during the course of a regular Monday night meeting. He recommended 30 minutes for each candidate, and the Board agreed.

Mr. Gryval asked about the Legal RFPs, to which Mr. Apple responded that the subcommittee had not met yet because of conflicting schedules. He indicated that he would report next week on efforts to schedule a time.

## **Public Hearing I (Revisited).**

The Chair asked if there were any additional questions or comments from the public regarding the Highway Safety Grant. There were none.

Motion. Mr. Gryval made a Motion to close the Public Hearing. Mrs. McKenney seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed, and the Public Hearing was closed at 6:35 p.m.

Motion. Mrs. McKenney made a Motion to accept the Highway Safety Grant in the amount of \$4,950.00. Mr. Gryval seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

The Board signed the accompanying forms where required.

## **Review and Consider Proposed 2012 Operating Budgets for Police and Emergency Management.**

### **Police:**

Chief Mulholland gave a broad overview of his budget, and the long-term goals for the Police Department. He said they had seen a significant reduction of 27% in the crime rate in Allenstown for the first 6 months of 2011 as compared to the first 6 months of 2010. The communities around Allenstown, however, have seen an increase in their crime rates, though minimal. The Chief attributed Allenstown's dramatic drop in crime rate to a number of things, one of which is a comprehensive Strategic Plan that the department had put together many years ago, and which was now paying off. He said the department used to receive approximately 16,000 calls for service annually but that this number has dropped over the past 10 years to about 7,000 calls per year.

The Chief explained that the Police department tracks activity by category: namely calls for service, criminal incidents reported, traffic accidents, arrests, and citations. He noted that aggressive prosecution of cases and thorough investigation to solve cases such as burglaries and drug sales were essential to the Strategic Plan.

Chief Mulholland reminded the Board of a time in the not-so-distant-past, when Allenstown had a reputation for having numerous 'drug houses'. He spoke about the frequency with which Allenstown was featured on the local news because of such activity. He noted that the reduction in drug activity and the overall crime rate had been achieved using the same resources as before, with even fewer officers on the force because department staffing has gone from 14 officers down to just 9 full-time and one part-time officer. The work has been done by using the officers more strategically, focusing them on certain areas with a higher need for patrol.

He then spoke of the challenges the department had faced in 2011, and the impact on the Police Department's budget for 2012. He noted salary increases and fuel increases as major factors in the increase. The transfer of the cost of the department's cell phones from the Emergency Management budget to the Police Department budget had added to the Bottom Line for 2012. The Chief pointed out that there had been no new programs or staff additions, as has been the case for the past several years.

Chief Mulholland stated that the issue of keeping competitive salaries has been a problem for the department, which went 4 years, (some personnel even went 5 years) without salary increases despite salary increases in competing communities. He noted that the Allenstown Police Department had been paying a fairly competitive salary in the past, but that it had unfortunately fallen behind the norm.

Chief Mulholland next referred the Board to the 'Revenues' portion of his budget, which he said were projected conservatively. Mrs. McKenney asked whether the amount entered on the Dispatch line was the finalized amount. The Chief responded that he would not know for sure what that cost would be until March 2012, after the budget is passed. He reported that that Allenstown's share would increase slightly because of increased call volume. He also reported that there was a planned 6% increase in the



total dispatch cost, to be shared amongst all 16 towns using that dispatcher.

The Chief discussed the cost of training a new Police Officer at the Police Academy. This training used to be paid for by penalty assessments on criminals rather than taxpayers. More recently, however, that money has been stretched to also partially fund the Fire Academy, to modernize the courts, and this year, it will also be used to subsidize the State Budget. The end result is less and less free inservice training, and more instances of required training needing to be paid for, at least in part, by the department. It's also looking like part of the cost of training a new Police Officer at the Academy will now fall to the department, on the Town level. Additionally, he said, the State is considering charging an annual recertification fee. These ideas, among others, are currently being discussed by a Legislative Study Committee, and will affect not just Police Departments, but Fire Departments as well.

Another possibility that could affect the final figures on the Dispatch line is more budget cuts at the County Sheriff's Department. If those cuts occur, then local Police Departments would be performing more transports, at their own expense. He said he had not figured in any increase to the Dispatch line because there were too many variables.

Mr. Gryval asked whether the salary increases, approved in 2010, should be included in the Default Budget. The Chair and the Chief agreed that it could not be so protected because the increases are not part of a collective bargaining agreement. There were no further questions.

Motion. Mrs. McKenney made a Motion to accept the Police Department's Proposed Operating Budget for 2012 in the amount of \$848,896.00. Mr. Gryval seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

### **Animal Control:**

Chief Mulholland stated that there had been no increases to this budget, with the exception of the full-year cost of the salary increase. The Board had no questions about the proposed budget.

Motion. Mrs. McKenney made a Motion to accept the Animal Control Proposed Operating Budget for 2012 in the amount of \$10,515.00. Mr. Gryval seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

### **Emergency Management:**

Chiefs Martin and Mulholland gave the Emergency Management presentation. They discussed the Emergency Exercise Grant, run in Allentown since 2007, and stated that it had been very effective in increasing the department's capabilities as well as finding shortfalls so that they could be corrected. Additionally, the Fire Department has applied for several Emergency Management Performance Grants which, if approved, will 100% cover the purchase of a new vehicle for the Fire Department.

They also discussed a decrease to the budget resulting from the transfer of cell phone fees to each of the departments that utilize them. They noted that all five of the large generators in Town have been consolidated into just one line for 2012. The remainder of the Emergency Management budget stayed much the same as in previous years.

The Select Board had no further questions for the Chiefs.

Motion. Mrs. McKenney made a Motion to accept the Emergency Management Proposed Operating Budget for 2012 in the amount of \$41,000.00. Mr. Gryval seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

## **Town Administrator's Report.**

### **Minutes.**

**August 22, 2011.** Mr. Apple presented draft Minutes for the August 22, 2011 meeting for approval. The Board made no corrections.

Motion. Mr. Gryval made a Motion to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 22, 2011 as written. Mrs. McKenney seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

Mr. Apple then presented draft minutes for Nonpublic Session I on August 22, 2011. The Board reviewed the draft. There were no corrections.

Motion. Mrs. McKenney made a Motion to accept the Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of Session I, August 22, 2011 as written. Mr. Gryval seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

Mr. Apple then presented draft minutes for Nonpublic Session II on August 22, 2011, and noted an error on the first page that incorrectly stated the start time of the session. The Board reviewed the draft.

Motion. Mr. Gryval moved to accept the Nonpublic Meeting Minutes of Session II, August 22, 2011 with the amendment as to the start time. Mrs. McKenney seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

### **Purchase Orders, Abatement Requests, Other Business.**

Mr. Apple presented to the Board for signature a Personnel Action Forms for the promotions given by Chief Martin.

Motion. Mr. Gryval made a Motion to hire James Castille as a call fire fighter at a rate of \$11.84 per hour, effective September 12, 2011. Mrs. McKenney seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

Motion. Mrs. McKenney made a Motion to hire Irina Kotolova as a call fire fighter at a rate of \$11.84 per hour, effective September 12, 2011. Mr. Gryval seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

### **Miscellaneous Paperwork.**

Mr. Apple presented the commissions for Peter Houlis and Beth Houlis, recently appointed as Parks & Recreation Commissioners, subject to successful background checks. He reported the checks were in process, and the Board signed the commissions.

### **Update on Boat Ramp.**

Mr. Apple said he and Mr. Pelissier had met with the Land Agent from Fish and Game regarding the Boat Ramp. He said the Agent was going to try to redesign the ramp to fit within the available space. If the redesign was unsuccessful, negotiations would begin with the abutting landowner for either a lease or purchase of enough property to complete the project.

The Board had no questions.

### **Update on Public Hearings.**

Mr. Apple reported that the Public Hearings on Ambulance Service and Curbside Recycling had been scheduled for October 3 at the Allenstown Elementary School at 6:00 p.m. The notice had been sent to the newspaper for publication on September 27.

He stated that the Chestnut Drive issue would be scheduled at a later date once the landowners had given consent.

### **Location of Next Select Board Meeting Reminder.**

Mr. Apple reiterated that the following week's Select Board meeting would be held at Allenstown Elementary School at 6:00 p.m.

### **Other Business.**

#### **Letter to Volunteers.**

Mrs. McKenney remarked about the volunteer helpers who made themselves available during Tropical Storm Irene. She thought it would be nice for the Select Board to send out a letter thanking them, as well as the all-volunteer Shelter Committee. Mr. Gryval agreed, as did Mr. Tardiff. Mr. Apple said he would get the sign-up sheet so as to have all the names of the volunteers.

#### **Vacation Time.**

Mr. Apple noted that he had spoken with each of the Department Heads about vacation time and had set up an estimate of what each of them would have at the end of the year if they took no vacation time. He said he had reminded them that employees can only carry over 40 hours of vacation time.

Mrs. McKenney asked if there was any way that the deadline could be extended, as she hated to see anyone lose the time that they have earned. Mr. Apple replied that the Select Board could elect to extend the rollover deadline into the next year.

## **School and Sewer Department Budgets.**

The Board discussed whether it was prudent to hear a Proposed Operating Budget presentation from the Sewer Department (or the School), since they do not control those budgets. The consensus of the Board was that it would not hear from these departments, but would defer to the Budget Committee. The Chair stated that this should not be viewed by the Budget Committee as an automatic approval by the Select Board and directed Mr. Apple to inform the Budget Committee Chair of the Board's decision.

## **Committee Updates.**

Mrs. McKenney stated that she had attended the last meeting of the Suncook Valley Regional Planning Commission, and thought it might be wise to add a permanent item on the agenda for committee updates. Mr. Gryval and Mr. Tardiff agreed, and Mr. Apple reported that he had already added the item to the Agenda form.

## **Nonpublic Session I.**

Motion. Mr. Gryval made a Motion to enter into nonpublic session, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(a) to discuss a matter related to personnel at 7:34 p.m. Mrs. McKenney seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

## **Public Session Reconvened.**

The Chair reconvened the public session at 7:50 p.m. and reported the following actions while in nonpublic session:

Motion. Mr. Gryval moved to return public session at 7:50 p.m. Mrs. McKenney seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

Motion. Mr. Gryval then moved to seal the minutes for Nonpublic Session I. Mrs. McKenney seconded the Motion. There was no further discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

## **Adjournment.**



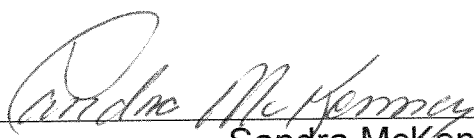
The Chair asked for any other business. There were no additional items.

Motion. Mrs. McKenney moved to adjourn. Mr. Gryval seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Tardiff-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Mrs. McKenney-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed,

The Chair adjourned the meeting at  
7:50 p.m.

**Signature Page.**

~Original Approval~	
	12-12-11
Jason Tardiff	Date
	12-12-11
Jeff Gryval	Date
	12-12-11
Sandra McKenney	Date

~Amendment Approval~	
Amendment Description:	
Jason Tardiff	Date
Jeff Gryval	Date
Sandra McKenney	Date