

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF MADISON
APRIL 21, 2015
MINUTES**

Selectmen Present - Chairman Josh Shackford, Michael Brooks (arrived late), and John Arruda.

Others Present – Town Administrator Melissa Arias; Josephine Belville of NH Department of Revenue Administration Property Appraisal Division; Jeff Earls, owner of Cross Country Appraisal Group; Fire Chief Jeff Eldridge; firefighters David Cribbie and Chris Weismann; Road Agent Bill Chick Sr. & Assistant Road Agent & firefighter Bill Chick, Jr.; and Madison TV videographer Carol Dandeneau.

Absent - Conservation Commission Chairman David Riss.

Where and When Posted - Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on January 7, 2015.

Meeting Called to Order – By the Chairman at 5:38 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Arruda made a **motion** to approve the Selectmen’s Meeting minutes of April 7, 2015 as prepared, seconded by Shackford, and so voted **2-0**.

PART-TIME SEASONAL MAINTENANCE POSITION FILLED – Shackford said the part-time seasonal maintenance position has been filled by Alan Libby based upon the decision of the Board made during the non-public session on April 7, 2015.

APPROVAL OF MANIFESTS – Arruda made a **motion** to approve the Manifest of April 20 - 27, 2015 in the amount of \$216,531.10, seconded by Shackford, and so voted **2-0**. The Manifest breakdown is as follows: \$22,685.02 for payroll; \$6,822.38 for payroll liabilities; \$37,023.70 for accounts payable; and \$150,000.00 for the Madison School District (release date 4/23/15).

THERE WERE NO PUBLIC COMMENTS

2015 STATISTICAL ASSESSING UPDATE – Josephine Belville from the NH Department of Revenue Administration Property Appraisal Division was in to talk with the Selectmen now that the 2015 Assessing Update contract has been signed by the Town and Cross Country Appraisal Group (CCAG). Jeff Earls, owner of CCAG, was also in attendance. Belville explained that she schedules meetings like this to discuss the anticipated project, timeline for work, and answer any questions from the Board prior to the statistical update. Belville asked Earls when he plans to begin the work and Earls said he’s already started looking at some of the sales over the last two years. Earls said he will get into the project more during June & July, which is also when all sales will be measured, listed, and photographed by a field assessor. Belville said she will obtain a list of the sales from Earls and go around to monitor and verify that the collection of data was accurate. Earls said the field work will be done by the same assessor that is just finishing our 2015 building permit pickups. Belville asked Earls to provide her a copy of CCAG’s assessing guideline manual so she can follow the same methods and manual used by the field assessor. Belville said she always sends postcards before visiting properties to give the owner an opportunity to be present or refuse her visit. She also always notifies Town Hall with the days she will be working in Madison in case phone calls are

received. Belville asked whether the Town has any special properties like ski areas, camps, businesses, that need special consideration during the update or might be difficult finding sale comparisons for. The group went quickly through King Pine Ski Area, Camp Tohkomeupog, Purity Spring Resort, Madison Lumber Mill, MacLean Precision, AJ Coleman & Son's gravel pits, Pike Industries' gravel pit, as a few properties that might fall into this category. Earls said he will conduct the valuation of the utilities and telecommunication companies as part of the contract. Belville asked for confirmation that CCAG will do the data entry into the Avitar software program and Earls said yes. Belville asked Earls if CCAG uses the 4-digit coding system that is part of the software and Earls said yes. Belville told the Selectmen how the 4-digit coding system in Avitar is an important feature because it allows detailed reports to be generated that show how many properties the assessors have visited, the reason for the visit or adjustment (building permit pickup, abatement application), whether entry to the building was possible or if only the exterior could be viewed, etc. Belville asked Earls for a printout of the specific codes used by CCAG in case they differ from those suggested by Avitar. Belville assured the Selectmen that she will notify the town if there are any concerns or issues during the update process at which point a meeting with the Board and CCAG can be scheduled. Earls said values should be turned over to the Town prior to the contract deadline of September 30th. Taxpayers will be notified of new values in writing and hearings will be held. Earls said specific appointment times will be set for hearings, which Belville said she will also attend. Belville said the USPAP Report will be reviewed by the DRA and either receive a passing or failing grade. The Report will be turned over to the municipality either way as a reference tool. Selectman Brooks arrived and Earls left the meeting. Belville briefly went through the Assessment Review Information Packet which was left with Arias. Belville also went over the review standards spreadsheet that includes the town's equalization and other assessment ratios, current use, exemptions and credits, assessing contract, accessibility to records, data accuracy, proportionality, and the USPAP report/manual. Belville provided a brief explanation for each of these components and encouraged the Selectmen to review the Charitable, Educational, and Religious BTLA A-9 and A-12 forms to ensure all exempt properties are still occupied and operating in a compliant way. Arias said there are about 6 entities that claim a tax exemption through the annual BTLA A-9 and A-12 process. Belville said there has been some confusion about vacant property being tax exempt for religious, educational, or charitable purposes and her interpretation is that it is not. Arias said there are several vacant lots that receive charitable exemptions and based upon advice from CCAG the exemption should not be challenged because of existing case law which found in favor of the organization, not the municipality. Arias said this update will be a good opportunity to look closely at the statutory requirements for the exempt properties in Madison.

FIRE TRUCK PROPOSAL – Last week Fire Chief Jeff Eldridge circulated copies of a proposal from Lakes Region Fire Apparatus for a brand new (not-yet-built) HME fire truck for \$363,820.00. Eldridge called the proposal packet an informational guideline for the truck and pointed out that it doesn't include a CAF system, light tower, generator, cord reel, or adequate power. Eldridge said the packet shows that Madison can get a truck for under the 2015 appropriation amount of \$363,999 but it will lack components that the Fire Truck Replacement Committee thought were important. Eldridge said Deputy Brooks and he reviewed the packet which hasn't been shared with the rest of the department yet. Brooks wants to reach out to other vendors to see if they might come up with a demonstration model for us to buy. Arruda talked about the demo trucks seen by members of the Replacement Committee at the Fire Chief's Convention last year. Eldridge said Cribbie took several members to Springfield Massachusetts to see various truck components and options to help them write up a recommendation. Brooks said the truck in this proposal makes it a demo because it has been engineered and can be built for us without any bells and whistles. Arruda asked Cribbie if attending the Fire Chief's Convention in June 2015 would be beneficial and Cribbie said probably not because the amount of funds available presently won't cover a demo purchase.

Cribbie said additional appropriations at next year's Town Meeting will likely be needed in order to get a truck that meets our specifications. Cribbie said another option would be to find a manufacturer who will build a truck to our specifications and use that truck as a demonstration model for 6-9 months before selling it to Madison. Arruda would like to see another group attend the Chief's Convention this year and start planning for a purchase next year. The down side of not purchasing in 2014 is the need to propose another warrant article in 2015 that will allow a bond of up to \$99,999 since the 2014 article expires at the end of this year. Cribbie said the Town should be able to recognize a 15% reduction in cost by looking at a demo model.

FIRE DEPARTMENT QUESTIONS FROM TOWN CLERK – The Selectmen received an e-mail from the Town Clerk dated April 9, 2015 containing questions specific to the Fire Department and recent change in oversight from Fire Commissioners to the Board of Selectmen. The Town Clerk needs clarification because she is statutorily obligated to keep the official records of the Town and complete reports for departments within the State of NH government annually. Questions #1 asked for the official name of the department; the Board said calling it the Madison Fire-Rescue Department was appropriate. Brooks said linking the Fire Department and Rescue Squad was accomplished through the hyphenated title. He added that omitting the term "volunteer" from the title doesn't change the fact that it's still a volunteer department. Question #2 asked for the Fire Chief's term end date and Question #3 asked if the Fire Chief will be appointed every year or at some other interval. A lengthy discussion on this ensued. Shackford said he'd like to get away from the annual appointment and do something more long term. He said there's a reason why Police Chief's aren't elected anymore and cited the risk of political upheaval in staying with an election process within the membership in order to get a Fire Chief recommendation. Eldridge said he personally agrees with Shackford and feels it would be beneficial for the Selectmen to determine a longer term. He said it will also be smoother for the department operations because it would take a new Fire Chief at least 6-12 months to get comfortable with running the department. Eldridge said it would also be less expensive because there's less chance of moving members around within appointed officer positions. Cribbie asked permission to speak and said there is animosity within the department every time an election comes around. Cribbie likes the membership having some say in who gets appointed as the Fire Chief but feels there are divides between the ranks. Brooks said he's been a long-time member of the Fire Department and past Chiefs have been able to retain their position for as long as they've wanted, even with an annual election process. Brooks said there weren't issues with people stepping up to run against the Fire Chief in years passed or dissention within the group. Brooks said the Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) approved by the Selectmen two weeks ago called for an annual election within the membership in order to come away with a recommendation for the Fire Chief position. Brooks said the existing members have been carrying forward under the pretense that there will be an annual election. In order to answer the Town Clerk's question, the Selectmen will now have to decide whether to amend a two-week old SOG. Weismann said the Fire Department he served on previously appointed members into officer positions for a term of between 2-4 years with successive moves up through the ranks. Chick Jr. said he'd be in favor of setting a term for Fire Chief but doesn't feel it should be open ended like Shackford suggested. The group discussed how many local officials are elected to 3-year terms (Selectmen, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Road Agent) and thought that might be appropriate for the Fire Chief position. Brooks said the election month needs to be considered from a budgetary standpoint. The SOG lists the month of November but the the group thought it would be more appropriate to conduct the election in March around the approval of the annual budget at Town Meeting. The Selectmen asked Arias to revise SOG #200001R titled Membership to change the election from the first Thursday of November to the third Thursday of March in the year the Fire Chief's appointment expires or if a vacancy occurs. The revised SOG will be given a date of April 21, 2015 instead of April 7, 2015 and will be signed once prepared. Arruda asked that the same SOG be

clarified where Junior/student firefighters are concerned. Arruda suggested adding a Section A., 4 outlining that Applicants under eighteen (18) years of age who are enrolled as a full-time student in the vocational department will be considered Junior members. Arruda said the Selectmen need to formally appoint Jeff Eldridge as the Fire Chief as long as the Board is comfortable with the three-year appointment and the election held in March 2014 which resulted in the recommendation that Eldridge become Chief. Question #4 asked that the Town Clerk's Office receive a list of firefighter names and their assigned position as appointed by the Fire Chief and Question #5 asked that the firefighter list be updated any time an individual joins the department, leaves the department, or has a position change within the department. The Selectmen and Fire Chief said the answer to these two questions is the Town Clerk will receive the information and updates she is requesting.

Motion: Shackford made a **motion** to appoint Jeff Eldridge as Madison Fire Chief for a three-year term, expiring in March 2018, with the Oath to be signed out of session by the Selectmen and Eldridge once prepared, seconded by Brooks, and so voted **3-0**.

Decision: Arias will ask the Town Clerk's Office to prepare Eldridge's Oath of Office and provide a copy of these minutes to answer the questions outlined in the Clerk's e-mail.

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES – Fire Chief Jeff Eldridge signed his line of the Standard Operating Guidelines approved by the Board of Selectmen on April 7, 2015, with the exception of SOG #200001R which was discussed and amended earlier in this meeting and will be prepared for signatures out of session with an April 21, 2015 date.

FORESTRY CALL – Eldridge wanted to publicly thank Fire Warden Richard Clark for assisting at a mutual aid forest fire call last week in West Ossipee. Eldridge said Clark came to the scene and operating the forestry truck for several hours which helped the departments involved.

CRACK SEALING – Arruda said he asked Chick Sr. & Chick Jr. to attend this meeting to discuss the crack sealing Purchase Requisition submitted to the Board. Arruda said he's very concerned that the East Madison Road project will run over and adequate funds won't be available so he asked if the crack sealing could be put off. Chick Sr. said he's not concerned about running out of money on East Madison Road and wants to move forward with crack sealing. Arruda asked Chick Sr. what's going to happen to Town Line Road since the top course of pavement was never applied and nothing has been done to the road in ten years. Chick Sr. said he doesn't recommend putting any money into crack sealing or additional pavement on Town Line Road because the pavement needs to be ground up and a good base put down underneath the road. Chick Sr. said there were issues with the Town Line Road project from the very beginning and it's too far gone to be repaired or crack sealed at this point. Brooks suggested scheduling an evening meeting with Chick Sr. & Chick Jr. to go over the road portion of the Capital Improvement document and list of roads to be worked on next. Brooks asked what will happen if Nicom can't complete the work in three days and Chick Jr. said the additional cost would be on them, not us.

Motion: Brooks made a **motion** to sign the Purchase Requisition for Nicom Coatings for an amount not to exceed \$12,600, seconded by Arruda, and so voted **3-0**.

Decision: Arias will fax the signed Purchase Requisition to Nicom and provide a copy to Chick Sr.

VETERANS MEMORIAL CAPSTONE – Arias said Arthur’s Memorials needs to know the left-to-right order for the five military service plaques being added to the existing Veterans memorial. Arruda pointed out that the Veterans Affairs clinic in Conway also recognizes the Merchant Marines and wondered if Madison should do the same on the monument. A quick Google search shows that, “The US Merchant Marine Academy is one of the five US Service academies”. Brooks said Arthur’s will have to tell us whether a Merchant Marine medallion exists. The group decided not to delay the process any longer and go with the order depicted on Arthur’s rendering since it appears the 5 medallions are in order of oldest to youngest service branch. Arias will pass the information onto Arthur’s Memorials tomorrow.

RESTORATION OF INVOLUNTARILY MERGED LOTS APPLICATION – Shackford said the Selectmen’s Office has received a Restoration of Involuntarily Merged Lots application from Noel & Linda Smith at 1363 Village Road (tax map 118, lot 031). Brooks said he will conduct research for the Town at the Carroll County Registry of Deeds prior to the Board scheduling a Public Hearing and sending certified, return receipt notices.

GOODWIN FOREST TRAIL & DEER CLEARING – Conservation Commission Chairman David Riss had requested a spot on the agenda to talk with the Selectmen about obtaining permission to build a trail and a deer clearing on the Goodwin Town Forest. Shackford said he’s pretty sure the Selectmen signed a Purchase Requisition for this work at the meeting he missed last month so the appointment probably wasn’t necessary.

SWAC RECOMMENDATIONS – Arruda said SWAC is working to revise the Transfer Station pamphlet and would like to have the cost for the non-resident coupon booklets raised from \$5/5 coupons to \$10/5 coupons. Arruda said the Town is hardly covering the cost of printing to coupon booklets and suggested the change be initiated when the next order is made. The other two Selectmen were good with this recommendation, especially since some towns charge big money for beach passes. Arruda said SWAC is looking closely at having the existing glass stockpile processed into ground material at a cost of between \$5,000 and \$7,000. Arruda will keep the Board apprised of this progress.

PART-TIME SEASONAL EMPLOYEE – Arruda said the new part-time seasonal employee brought information to him about two damaged or broken headstones at the Gilman Cemetery. Arruda said the report is vaguely familiar and asked whether the Board discussed this previously. Shackford said someone brought it to the town’s attention last year but we’re not responsible for repairs. The information was passed along to the owner of the cemetery, Alan Gilman. The group briefly discussed the perpetual care funds maintained by the Trustees of the Trust Fund.

PURCHASING POLICY – Arruda asked Arias to put a copy of the Town’s Purchasing Policy on his desk so he can review it and ensure every Department in Town is aware of the requirements and compliant.

SIGNATURE ITEMS –

Manifest

Payroll & Accounts Payable Checks

Purchase Requisition #2015-FINA-001 – Martin & Jean Construction (\$1,000) desk panels (2)

#2015-HIGH-003 – NICOM Coatings (\$12,600) 3 days crack sealing

Timber Tax Warrant & Worksheet – 14-283-05-T – Hocking Trust

14-283-10-T – VanBrunt

Elderly Exemption Application – 115-019 & 234-067

Excavation Warrant – #14-283-03E Coleman (110-002) \$17.96
#14-283-04E – Coleman (202-001) \$2,623.64
#14-283-05E – Baron Trust (202-008) \$712.04
#14-283-06E – Coleman Trust (202-026) \$550.20

Intent to Excavate - #15-283-03E Coleman (110-002)
#15-283-04E – Coleman (202-001)
#15-283-05E – Baron Trust (202-008)
#15-283-06E – Coleman Trust (202-026)
#15-283-07E – Drew (232-038)

Oath of Office/Appointment – SWAC – Sandra Brocaar & Charles White
Energy Advisory – Bruce Kennedy

Release Deed – Tax deeded lot redemption for 409 Boulder Rd by CitiFinancial Credit Co (111-003)

7:25 PM – Shackford made a **motion** to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3II(c) to discuss a Fire Department incident that occurred on April 9, 2015 with the Fire Chief, seconded by Brooks. Roll call vote: Arruda – aye; Brooks – aye; Shackford - aye. **7:48 PM** – Arruda made a **motion** to return to public session and seal the minutes of the non-public session, seconded by Brooks, and so voted **3-0**.

7:48 PM – Arruda made a **motion** to adjourn, seconded by Brooks, and so voted **3-0**.

NEXT SELECTMEN’S MEETING – The next Selectmen’s Meeting will be on Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa S. Arias, Town Administrator
Recording Secretary