

Town of Whitefield
Select Board Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2012

Present: Steve McCormick, Tom Colpitt, Lester Sheaffer and Dennis Merrill

Select Board actions

1. The minutes of the March 20 meeting were approved 3-0-1.
2. Land question. Scott Miller of Chelsea came in to inquire about a small parcel on Cooper Road he wants to buy. Since the parcel is less than 1.5 acres, it is nonconforming. The Board will send a letter to Mr. Miller saying it has no objection to the sale with that understanding.
3. Roads. David Boynton came in and reported things have been quiet. On the budget, it appears that, including carryforward from last year, there is about \$4-5,000 remaining in the roads account. David said there is no pending work.
4. The Board signed two warrants.
5. Boston Post Cane. Libby Harmon came in and provided the Board with a proposed policy for awarding the Boston Post Cane. The Board did not suggest changes, and she will finalize the draft with the Historical Society and come back with a policy for adoption.
6. Fire Station use policy. Dennis got some clarification from MMA regarding liability coverage and has made some changes in the draft policy. This will be circulated to Board members and the Fire Chief as a draft.
7. Fire and Rescue. Scott Higgins, Tim Pellerin and Lynn Talacko were present to discuss recent calls and concerns. Chief Pellerin expressed his pride in the professional way Department personnel performed on a very difficult rescue call recently. On March 27 there was a mid-morning auto accident on Townhouse Road. Initially, no one was available from Whitefield. Jefferson was called but had no one either. Alna was able to respond. The driver was not seriously injured and was removed from the vehicle by Louis Sell. Also, on March 27 in the afternoon a chicken coop fire was reported on Hunts Meadow Road. Pittston was first on the scene and did a great job in containing the fire on a very dry and windy day. Whitefield, Alna, Jefferson and Somerville all responded.

These two calls on March 27 point out a serious problem with availability of personnel during weekdays. Since most firefighters work out of town, this is not an easy problem to address. Chief Pellerin noted that in some areas towns have combined resources to have a first response team that can cover several towns.

It was noted that the amount of paperwork needed for the fire and rescue is very significant and under appreciated. The hours required for this are far greater than that covered by stipends and salaries. Someday, consideration could be given to a paid administrator to assume the paperwork duties and free up Department officers for fire and rescue duties. The Board suggested that a record be kept to document the hours spent on records.

Finally, there was a general discussion on how to better inform the public about the amount of effort and activities of the fire and rescue personnel.

Assessors' Actions

1. The Board reviewed a list of the older tax acquired properties.
2. The Board briefly discussed the situation with two parcels of land that are tax acquired but were subsequently sold by the party to another person. Dennis will prepare a chronology of events in preparation for the parties coming in next week.