

**Town of Whitefield
Select Board Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2013**

**Present: Steve McCormick, Frank Ober, Lester Sheaffer and Dennis Merrill
Administrative Assistant Aaron Miller**

Select Board actions

- **The minutes of the August 13 meeting were approved 3-0-1.**
- **Auditing services. Christian Smith, a representative of Macpage came in to meet the Board and discuss his firm's capabilities and services for the Town's annual audit. They have multiple municipal clients and an office in Augusta. He estimated the audit work would take about 100 hours and a report would be available about a month after the fieldwork is done.**
- **Fire department. Scott Higgins came in to report the last month has been a busy one. All engines have had their annual tests and all passed. Air packs have also all been tested successfully. The department is forming a truck committee to examine the needs for replacement equipment moving forward. They hope to have recommendation for the next annual town meeting. The department has two applicants firefighter; one is also an EMT. Scott has had a request to burn a building and he is evaluating this as the structure does offer some training opportunities. Aaron noted the MMA has safety grants of up to \$2,000 and Scott will look into how the Town can benefit; the application deadline is the end of September.**
- **Auto graveyard permit. The Board reviewed an application from Paul's Pick a Part for an auto graveyard permit. This is actually just a change in name and not new operation. Aaron reported the CEO has not had any complaints on the operation. The paperwork appeared to be possibly incomplete and Aaron will investigate.**
- **Tax acquired properties. Aaron reported he has met with Patrick Thayer who is willing to enter into a repurchase agreement; he expects the paperwork to be returned on Friday. The Miller heirs parcel on Cooper Road is being advertised for sale by sealed bid; notice also need to be made to abutters.**
- **Personnel policy. Aaron reported he has received an e-mail from MMA's legal service regarding the use of medical marijuana. Essentially, town employees cannot be on the job under the influence.**

- **Tax commitment.** Tom Hayes was present and updated the Board on the tax commitment. He has a few loose ends to clean up, but the total valuation is down slightly from last year.
- **Salt shed door.** Aaron said a second firm will be coming on Wednesday to provide an estimate on repairs to the overhead door at the salt shed. The Board voted 4-0 to allow Aaron to proceed with the work using the most favorable proposal.
- **Recycling building.** There has not been any new interest from contractors in replacing the recycling build's roof. Aaron will investigate placing an ad in the Kennebec Journal.
- **Worker's compensation.** Aaron noted that MMA is refunding \$1,178 to the Town on its worker's compensation insurance since we have been claims free.
- **Winter sand.** The Board voted 4-0 to put purchase of winter sand out to bid. Some sand is already in place, but the proposal will be for up to 4,000 yards. The bid date will be Sep. 6 and bids will be opened Sep. 10.
- **November election.** Aaron said it appears there will be a State referendum on Nov 5. He recently went to training on the vote counting machine the State is making available to the Town. The machine will be used at this election. The Board discussed hand counting the ballots as well to develop local confidence in the machine.

Assessor's actions

Tom Hayes was present to participate in discussion of several issues.

- **Fenderson property.** The Fenderson lot of about 1.4 acres on Hilton Road has been assessed as having a building and base lot. The building was removed several years ago and the lot, due to its size, is non-conforming and should not have a base lot. The Board voted 4-0 to abate the past due taxes for the building and base lot.
- **Ripley property.** Tom reported the mobile homes on the tax acquired Ripley property on Blue Goose Lane have no significant value. The Board voted 4-0 to abate the value to reflect no buildings and one base lot.
- **Ripley Property.** Tom reported the house, barn and mobile home on the tax acquired Ripley property on Townhouse Road have no significant value. The Board voted 4-0 to abate the value to reflect no buildings and one base lot.

- **Combining lots policy.** After some discussion, the Board voted 4-0 to adopt the draft policy for combining lots owned by the same person.
- **Requests to combining lots.** The Board considered some requests that had been filed to combine plots:
- **The Board was not inclined to combine lots owned by Sam Bartlett on Mills Road since one parcel has a commercial structure.**
- **The Board voted 4-0 to combine three undeveloped lots on Devine Road owned by Proknee Corp.**
- **The Board was not inclined to combine lots owned by Tim Chase on opposite sides of Grand Army Road for that reason. (One lot is non-conforming and has not base lot so combining would not make and practical difference in taxes.)**
- **Other requests are pending and will be acted upon at the next meeting. Most appear to be in line with the newly adopted policy. One request was to combine parcels across Crocker Ave, a discontinued town road. While this may not be consistent with the policy, the property owner could also consider requesting reduced valuations based on the parcels being remote.**

Assessor's actions

1. **None**