



FINAL

**WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, October 8, 2012**

PRESENT: Tom Clow, Chairman; Richard Butt, Vice Chairman, John Lawton, James Leary, Naomi Bolton, Town Administrator

GUESTS: Jon Osborne, Chairman, Dave Hewey, Steve Roberts, Chief Bob Vezina, Sheila Savaria, Recording Secretary

****Note:** This was a joint meeting between the Board of Fire Wards and the Board of Selectmen**

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Clow opened the meeting at 6:30 pm at the Weare Town Office Building.

II: WORK SESSION: Chairman of the Board of Fire Wards, Jon Osborne, requested this joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the Fire Chief's appointed term, per diem pay in the budget, and driveway plans.

Fire Chief's appointed term – Mr. Osborne explained that in 1977 the Town voted the BOFW back into existence as well as the establishment of the Fire Chief on a one year basis to be determined by the Selectmen. In 1994, there was an article proposed saying the BOFW would appoint the Chief. The BOFW is requesting a warrant article allowing the Chief's term to be indefinite. The Chief's position is a permanent part-time position and to drop the one-year term would help to give the position more stability.

Steve Roberts summarized RSA 154.5, which said the term could be appointed for an indefinite period or a definite term, and that the tenure of office depends on efficiency. Mr. Roberts feels that for the efficiency of the town, the position should be made like most other department heads who have indefinite terms.

Vice Chairman Butt asked what difference it would make if he was reappointed each year or not. If the Chief was doing a good job, he would be reappointed. If not, then he won't be. The difference is that it is an employee position and not a contract position. The BOFW and BOS discussed if the Chief's position would become full time and what new responsibilities would be apart of that job. Mr. Osborne said the job description would not change. Currently the part time Chief makes \$31,200 a year and has a 32 hour per week cap. Chairman Clow advised Mr. Osborne to write the article as he'd like to see it on the warrant and present it to the BOS.

Per Diem Pay – The per diem pay is currently in a revolving fund from ambulance billing and the BOFW feels it should go into the operating budget. Chief Vezina said the per diem program is successful and the volunteers are used on a daily basis. The need for mutual aid has gone down significantly and is now only used for concurrent calls.

The discussion turned to the capital reserve fund and the need to restore it through ambulance billing. Chief Vezina explained that there is about \$20,000 of uncollected funds that should be in the capital fund. That lost money is partly from the agreement they have with Blue Cross Blue Shield who direct bills

residents, who are not obligated to pay ambulance billing. Chief Vezina feels they could set up collections in a more compassionate way to bill and collect from everyone who uses their services, and coupled with how they pay for per diem expenses could make a healthier capital fund. Chief Vezina explained to the BOS how the fire department bills services and how the insurance companies pay them. Currently, there are rates for non-residents, and discounted rates for town residents. Chief Vezina would like to delete the resident discount. If the BOFW breaks their contract with BCBS, they will pay more, but it will go directly to the residents, who may not pay the fire department. There is a better way to deal with the hardship issue than allowing a resident to opt out of paying the bill. Vice Chairman Butt asked about charging a negligence fee for someone who has caused a DWI accident. Chief Vezina thinks that is an ordinance currently, but he does not feel a lot of revenue would be generated by collecting that way.

Chairman Clow said it is the BOS decision whether the \$90,000 should be put in the operating budget to pay for the per diem program, and a warrant article needs to be created that talks about how money from ambulance billing would be used, but does not say to put the money in the operating budget. The BOS feels they can work with the BOFW request, but the public would have to have a say.

Driveway Plans: Mr. Osborne advised the BOS that the BOFW and the Planning Board came up with driveway plans to be adopted by the Planning Board and put into the contractor package.

Wage Scale: Chief Vezina wants the BOS input on a change in the Fire Departments wage scale. The wage scale has previously been frozen and there is no way for employees to progress. Vezina proposed a realignment of the wage scale to reflect what they are doing with the per diems and other employees. Some people are paid one wage during the day, but a much lower pay when they are on call as a per diem. The scale would affect everyone and would align the based on their skill set.

Chairman Clow said he'd like to see the proposal to see how much it will cost and how many people it would affect, and feels a new wage scale could do wonders for the morale of the department. Chief Vezina will lay out the whole scale for the BOS to see.

III: ADJOURNMENT: As there was no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Savaria
Recording Secretary