



**TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 20, 2009**

Michael Bowie, Chair At Large 2009
Gina Mason, Vice Chair District 1 2010
Fern Larochele, Jr., At Large 2010
Roger Cote, At Large 2011
Janet Henry, District 1 2009
Dale Crafts, District 2 2010
Norma Wells, District 2 2009

CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE TO THE FLAG. The Chairman, Michael Bowie, called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL. Members present were Councilors Wells, Bowie, Mason, Crafts, Henry, and Cote. **Councilor Larochele was excused.** Also present were Stephen Eldridge, Town Manager; Cathy Ricker, Finance Director; Mark Stevens, Recreation Director; Gordon Curtis, MTM Board of Directors; Richard Green, Superintendent of Schools; Traci Austin, School Committee Member; and approximately 15 citizens in the audience.

PUBLIC HEARING - NONE

CONSENT AGENDA

VOTE (2009-134) Councilor Cote, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to approve the Minutes of September 22 and October 6, 2009. **Order passed - Vote 6-0.**

COUNCIL ORDERS, RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES - NONE

OTHER BUSINESS

A. FACILITY COMMITTEE - SCHOOL UPDATE

(Postponed Item until after B. Recreation Director's Report)

B. RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Stevens said I want to start off by introducing Sherri Garnett our new Secretary/Programmer, Jamie Martin our Assistant Recreation Director, and Gordon Curtis representing the MTM Board of Directors. Since July there have been a lot of things going on at the MTM Center. Every night during the week there are probably 30 or 40 people doing various things down there. The Historical Society is still there. LACO now has evening hours two nights a week in addition to their morning hours. Head Start is in there from September to May. Those are the long term space holders since we started the Center. Some of the newer programs include the pre-school program. We painted the walls in that room. They share a room with Roy's Driving School. In the mornings it's a pre-school room and in the afternoon it's the driving school room. We renovated another room and turned it into a Karate Do Jo room where we have 60 participants using it five days a week. Other programs use that room when the Do Jo is not being used. Our Fitness Center has had over 400 participants since we started and thankfully they are not all active because I don't think that we could handle that many people working out there. We have had 30 new participants in the last 60 days so that's always growing as well.

Mr. Stevens said I'll go down through the list of rentals so you can get an idea of how many use our facility. Since July we rented it to Tap Industries from Nebraska for their Tool Show, two yard sales, Serve New England Program through the School Department, and the Democratic Committee. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension held its end of the year party there and the Snowmobile Club just had a big lobster feed down there as well. We hold our Seniors' Plus Health Screenings every Friday. HEAP has been down there offering services to folks who qualify. The Lisbon Junior Athletic League and Boy Scouts were down. We have held bridal showers, baby showers, birthdays, craft fairs, and you name it. People come down to rent the space for pretty much any get together. We do family reunions every year.

Mr. Stevens said our day camp numbers are up again. Six years ago we brought in \$5,300 from Summer Day Camp. This past year our revenues for that one camp with 97 participants grew to \$9,900, and we still have some outstanding balances we expect to collect. This is quite a big jump in revenue.

Mr. Stevens said the Sunshine Hill Neighbors Program is quite busy. Aline Strout is our coordinator for that program. She has taken them to Boston, Willow Brook Village, the Fryeburg Fair, on the Songo River Queen, and to the Christmas Tree Shop in Portland. Every Monday from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. they play cribbage, and every other Friday we have a luncheon for 50 folks who come down to eat, but really it's about sharing memories and creating relationships. That's probably the best thing that's occurred down there since I've been down there.

Mr. Stevens said we started Yoga this fall. We are working with the Adult Ed Program to try and fill in some of the gaps for our community. 12 participants have taken aerobics again. 210 kids are participating in our soccer program. 92 kids are playing football, which is the most we have ever had playing football. 36 kids are playing field hockey. This program is growing as well. Our before and after school program we started a while back is really popular with 62 kids participating. Those programs pay for themselves. Most of the new programs we have started within the past ten years pay for themselves as well. Mr. Stevens said I want to thank this Council for supporting the Recreation Department.

Councilor Henry asked how much is it to rent your facility? Mr. Stevens said for non-profits it's \$12.50 an hour for the gym and \$5.00 for a classroom.

Councilor Bowie said I would like to commend you and your group for everything you have done down there. You have done a great job down there.

Item taken out of order.

A. FACILITY COMMITTEE - SCHOOL UPDATE

Mr. Green said we can start with the October 7 letter (see attached) from NEASC. This letter indicates that the Lisbon High School (LHS) did remain on probation, but LHS is fully accredited so there is no change there. As you read down through the letter you will see some acknowledgements from the commission in regards to some of the work that we have done. There is a list of several things that I want to bring to your attention throughout my report. One NEASC requirement is the 5-year report, which is due in March of 2010. The majority of the areas that they looked at are all areas we are in the process of addressing if we haven't already. They, also, added at the bottom of that page that they would like to have answers to a few things including the art room, which as you know is underneath the gym. The facilities committee has discussed in detail moving that particular room next to the existing art room, putting up a wall in there, and then moving that classroom there now to another location. Unfortunately, we can't do that during the school year. We are hoping to start that in the spring. That is one of the major areas left on the NEASC report that they keep bringing up and that's something that we will definitely be addressing this spring. At the bottom of that page you will see the attachment of the portable classrooms as well. We talked about building classrooms, similar to the ones at the middle school

that are attached to the building, so that will reduce the amount of security issues. This will be discussed at the next Facilities Committee meeting because we are finding that contractors are looking for work right now, which may be to our advantage to have them start now rather than wait until spring.

Mr. Green said the last piece involves submitting a new building project facilities application. As you read through my report you realize that we have recently hired engineers to do a Facilities Analysis of this school.

Mr. Green said a couple of other important things on NEASC. One, Representative Crafts has scheduled a meeting with the Commissioner of Education, I, and one other representative for later this month so we will be meeting with her to discuss the needs at Lisbon. The other thing is, I have a meeting in November with the NPA. I think I mentioned this to you before; on their ruling on the High School gym in regards to why we can have regular season games and no playoffs. I believe they are looking at alternatives. I am going to appeal to see if I can get the High School grandfathered or to see if they will support a playoff format that would not require schools to have those first round of playoffs in their own buildings, they would all be in Augusta. I believe that's one of their proposals so I will at least go up there and see what they have to say; I am not sure anyone has ever done that.

Mr. Green said as a result of the reductions we have made to the school budget, I have provided you with a copy of the LHS Building Project Summary (see attached) although we will be making a revision to this when Cathy Messmer gets back. As you can see the monies that were available, as we discussed in length the different budget reductions that occurred in November of 2008 and then the budget reductions we made last year through the budget process to allow us to use all the stimulus money on the facility, is outlined in detail there for you. We were asked to create a list of expenses and demonstrate what work has been done in the High School.

Mr. Green said after completing the space analysis we were able to move the music room out into one of the portables, which addressed a lot of the sound and program issues in the NEASC report. We were able to add propane to the science classrooms. The gym floor has been repaired. We relocated the buses off campus. We painted the outside of the gym. We re-did the lobby outside the gym. We replaced the floor and tiles there. They painted the lobby area so it looks real nice now. Recently, we are in the process of finishing what we consider the Library/Computer Resource Room. It's an area where the computers were; what they did was put up a wall in there so that students would be able to go in there and work. Teachers will be able to use that as a computer lab without disturbing the Library. This was recommended by the High School Staff. It gives the Technology Teacher space to teach her classes in there so now she doesn't have to push her portable laptop cart around the building. We are looking at replacing the ceiling tiles in the 300 wing in the new science classroom. He said Traci Austin will talk a little bit about some of the other things. All of this information is available on our webpage at www.lisbonschoolsme.org

Mrs. Austin said I have been asked by residents and Councilors what impact these referendums could have on the schools. She said the first question on excise tax, I think you all are aware of what that could do to your budget and the trickle down theory applies here. It will have an impact on the school budget, as well as Question Number 3, the School Consolidation law. It's been said that if that gets repealed they will switch back to School Administrative Districts. What that has to do with our application in March, we are not sure. We don't know what that's going to look like. What we are talking about is a whole lot of what ifs and everybody has their own what if. From the School Committee perspective it's been shown that it's not going to save money so we don't know what power of voting this is going to take on or what it would look like. Tabor, question number 4, yet again, if it passes, all of us will be in some dire straights as to what's going to happen with budgets.

Mrs. Austin said the next thing is the Facilities Analysis. We conducted interviews on September 29 and 30. The Facilities Committee recommended we hire Scott Simmons from Casco Bay

Engineering for the project. That was approved by the School Committee at the last meeting. They will start work immediately. There is a letter from them (see attached) outlining what the proposed scope and schedule of the work will be. The timing for the two community meetings will need to be addressed by the committee. After those meetings they will report out in mid-January sometime. Scott Simmons & Casco Bay Engineering will be helping the School Department fill out their application for the Capital Improvement Plans. There is about \$120,000,000 available. If you remember we were number 27 on the previous list. Twenty projects were approved way back when so you would think we would be number 7 when you open back up the application process, but that's not always true. Everyone else gets to apply even if they didn't apply in the first round and if they are deemed worse off then we get shuffled around. We will know more as time goes on.

Councilor Bowie said thank you for keeping us and the public informed. I know we appreciate it. I think the committee and everyone has done a lot of great work. Thank you for all your effort.

Councilor Wells said we talked about construction costs being better right now. Mr. Green said yes, earlier. We are finding that some of these little projects when we put them out to bid they are coming back much lower than we thought. At the next Facilities Committee meeting I am going to propose that we look at attaching the two classrooms, because we talked about building those out behind the cafeteria and attaching them to the building. It may be best to do that work this fall instead of in the spring.

Councilor Wells said I remember last year's year end report, which stated you had over \$300,000 left over in undesignated funds. Can that be used towards some of these costs, which would allow you to go forward, she asked. Mr. Green said I believe that money has been used to offset taxes every year, but we will explore that. Once the money is turned over I think it's been used to offset taxes. I don't think we have ever been in a position where we have asked the Council to use it as far as I know.

Councilor Wells said I know that it is always used the following year to offset the taxes and it probably will be a budget issue you would have to consider for next year, but I'm just thinking that it is undesignated money and money that the taxpayers have already raised. It has to be used for schools, so I am just throwing that out there; this is something we might want to explore.

Mr. Green said this has come up in a lot of discussions about whether it is available to use, but in the same sense the next two budget years will be the most difficult probably so you may want to use that as it has been because the State is starting to change their description of what they would say is a curtailment. We are going to have a curtailment in December. They are starting to not call it a curtailment anymore; they are starting to call it a reduction. They are trying to tell us to anticipate 2006 funding for the 2010-2011 budget year. He said I think we need to be real careful about how we go and spend that money.

Councilor Wells said I go to these Facility Committee meetings and there is a part of me that says how do we make this happen and how do we move it forward. We all know how sometimes it can take a huge process to get a bond through to move that forward. Mr. Green said I recently read an article in a newsletter about a school project that came in \$6 million dollars or so less than anticipated so if you do have any type of funds, now would be the time to put those proposals out there because people are looking for work.

C. FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Ricker said I trust you got the new and improved reports. They are different from the ones I issued last month. I tried to shorten up the revenues summary so you could see everything on one page. Excise tax is up over last year by \$10,000. That must be the cash from the clunkers program. Revenue sharing, on the other hand, last year over the same period is down about \$96,000. She said Mr. Eldridge keeps asking me how we ended up last year and I don't know if we ever said it at a

meeting, but tax collection in the last fiscal year we ended up being short over what we had budgeted by about \$85,000 and then on the revenue sharing side we were down about \$193,000 from what we had budgeted last year. This year we reduced our excise tax budget by over \$200,000, but part of that was anticipating the excise tax reduction passing. We went down on the revenue sharing budget by \$63,000 from what we had last year. It's still looking a little tight on that in that aspect.

Ms. Ricker said solid waste looks to be on budget. The first half of the tax bills was due. As of today we have collected about 46.65% of this year's tax commitment, which ideally we would have been at 50%, but obviously 46.65% is not too far out of line.

Ms. Ricker said on the expenditure side you will notice that the grouping is different. I have grouped departments in terms of how they roll up to our financial statements. The major categories are general government, public safety, public works, public services, and then the smaller ones such as general assistance, county tax abatements, debt service, and our bonds. Under general government we have miscellaneous general government, which are our TIF monies for \$406,000 and our overlay for \$367,000. Miscellaneous public services, which has a budget of about \$23,000 includes AVCOG, MMA, LACO, Memorial Day, Historical Society, and the Moxie donation that we do every year.

Ms. Ricker said Lisbon is a full service agent now so we don't have to send people over to Topsham as much as we used to because we can do private sales, we can plate them up front, which we couldn't do before. That has slowed things down. We do have a learning curve, but people are much happier because they don't have to go up to Topsham or to some other State Motor Vehicle office to do the rest of their transaction. The website now contains Trio information from the Assessing side and how much is due on taxes, which is real helpful to realtors.

Ms. Ricker asked the Council whether they wanted the detailed quarterly report weekly, monthly, or quarterly. She said before Trio I had to print the detail report for the first meeting of each month because if I didn't run the report at that time I could not go back and recreate one. Now with Trio I can go in and ask for any month that you want. Whatever you decide is fine. I will give you the summary and we can get the details for you anytime. Councilor Bowie said would Council like the detailed report. Councilor Wells said once a quarter would be nice just to review it instead of doing it monthly. Ms. Ricker said I'll put the first quarterly report in your mailboxes tomorrow so you can look at that.

Councilor Wells said why is there \$58,000 expended for abatements? Ms. Ricker said there was a portion of non-profits who ended up getting a tax bill and those needed to be abated. The rest of them had to do with applications for exemptions that weren't processed. On the other hand, we did have \$9,600 in supplementals so you still have a net of about \$50,000. We have an overlay of about \$367,000 so that sort of offsets that. The rest of the overlay sort of offsets the \$250,000 that we took from surplus to reduce the commitment so we are really tight right now and here we are in the fourth month of our year.

D. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Eldridge said there was another meeting on the transportation issues that we have coming up. This was something that was driven by the legislature to try to find a way to simplify the road system and how the state aid roads work. This has most municipalities frightened to death. They are afraid they are going to be handed back all the expense of taking care of our roads. MDOT says that it's just a process and that is not in the picture, but we are all saying we'll wait and see. This is something that they expect to have finished by January in the upcoming year, the legislature has it, it's a tall task, and I'm sure they will be working hard at it.

Mr. Eldridge said, once again, the county dispatch is organized and they had their first meeting yesterday. The room was full of Fire Chiefs, Police Chiefs, and Connie from EMA was there. We had some good discussions with all the people who use the service. They are trying to come up with a way to make it work. We anticipate that more than likely this county is going to end up with one dispatch. This group and the County Commissioners are hoping we have some kind of control of how they determine that and how it gets funded. They will be meeting again next week.

Mr. Eldridge said we will be talking about assessing and the revaluation process so we can get Lisbon back up to at least 70% by next year. We are at 56% this year. We are losing revenue from the state from tree growth and the homestead exemption program. We will work towards getting that back up to 70%. We will put together a presentation to show you how we plan to accomplish that.

Mr. Eldridge said our Police Department did a drug bust recently. They recovered \$684.00 in cash. The Council typically votes to accept these funds. This is a pretty standard procedure. This came in at the last minute and we didn't get the paperwork until today. He said it has to be used for vests and things like that.

VOTE (2009-155A) Councilor Henry, seconded by Councilor Wells moved to accept the \$684 from the Criminal Forfeiture. **Order passed - Vote 6-0.**

Mr. Eldridge said he emailed Charlie Smith about the photograph that came up at the last meeting. I will try to coordinate it so that we can do three photographs of the Council and past Councils at once before the transition takes place.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Gordon Curtis said in the last paragraph of the bond issue articles it basically says that if the voters accept a vote for those articles that it kind of doesn't make a difference what the bottom line cost is. Now, if I go and vote on the water one for the \$1,720,000 and I know there is interest and other stuff in there, let's say the whole town votes for that and then it comes in at a whole lot more than that or something; it seems to me that there ought to be a ceiling, like if its over 10% then it should have to come back to the voters. Is this something new? Do you understand me?

Councilor Bowie said I am not sure if I do or not. The \$1,720,000 is a value that we can't exceed. The sample ballot says in an amount not to exceed \$1,720,000 for a term not to exceed 30 years.

Councilor Wells said his confusion is actually in the Treasurer's Statement under Section C and that's because it's an estimate based on what the interest range would be so what they are telling you is that they are giving you a range of what the interest might be on that bond over that time. This is saying that if you were to take this estimate based on the \$1.7 million dollar bond plus the estimated interest the total of the debt service would be in the case of the \$1.7 million, it could be \$3,147,890 and what they are saying is that they won't guarantee that there couldn't be an error in what the interest might be on the bond. Mr. Curtis said, right, that's what I'm saying. Councilor Wells said in most cases it could be less rather than more because we don't borrow all the money at once so you don't start paying back on all the money at once.

Mr. Curtis said all right, but what if you went over that by a great amount. Councilor Wells said I don't know how it could unless interest rates went sky high. You lock in your interest rate when you do your bond. You still can't borrow more than the \$1,720,000. Mr. Curtis said okay, thank you.

George Caron said I have a question. I wanted to ask it last year. This still hasn't resolved itself and I have a question on what do I have to do to resolve it. On the ballot, on the referendum questions, it says the Town Council recommends that you vote yes. He said don't you think that's a bit much to put on the ballot? What do I have to do to get a referendum question to say that the people don't want that on the ballot? Mr. Caron said is there a rule that it has to be there?

Councilor Bowie said you have a Council that is supposed to be doing the management so what we are doing is, based on our charter, you have to come back to the town for anything over \$100,000. What we are saying is that the Council is in favor of doing this project. The Council is recommending going forward with this money based on the deliberations, the discussions we have had, and the research we have done. We are not saying you have to vote one way or the other.

Mr. Caron said can't we put it on the wall and keep it off the ballot. Councilor Bowie said I think this has been done in every municipality.

Councilor Crafts said I understand where you are coming from, but I think it's important that the townspeople know how the Council feels about these issues. We gather more information and we are the heartbeat of representation of the people and we just want to say look we've looked at this and we think this is a great idea for the town. I think its great information for the voter.

Mr. Caron said I just don't want it on the ballot. Is there a petition or something I can do to remove it? Councilor Bowie said to my knowledge it's been this way forever. It was the same way when we used to have town meeting.

Councilor Cote said one thing that you want to remember is that when we discuss the pipeline and things that we are entitled to information the rest of the public doesn't necessarily have an opportunity to read or get involved in and they look to the Council that deals with this and they say what do our representatives feel? When they are looking at that ballot they have in front of their face that the Council felt that this was in the best interest of the town. There are a lot of issues that come into play. We take all this information, compile it, and we make a determination, that either we accept it or we don't and the people that are voting can glance at their ballot and see how their Council voted to see what their representatives felt should be done because they do not have the material in front of them to read. If we gave them all the material to make an intelligent vote that we have had to go through over the last month they would be in the voting booth for 24 hours. We have got to relay our opinion to the people at a convenient time so they will be able to vote.

Councilor Mason said all the information that we have compiled to come to this conclusion to put this on the ballot, all of those meetings are public, so you could have come and you could have seen the reason why we choose to do that. They would see our vote and see what was recommended anyways. Councilor Bowie said we are going to take a look into that for you.

Michelle Swatsworth-Turmelle said I recall the way the wording is because I looked at it on the website after you guys had taken the time to discuss it, also, in there is our Budget Advisory Committee's recommendation. They, also, looked at this information and had given their yes vote to it as well. Just so you know this is not just the Town Council. If you had read that information on the website and if you were here you would know whether that yes vote was by a majority or a 7-0 vote. All of that information is in the minutes and anyone can go back and read it.

Dorothy Fitzgerald said first I would like to commend Mark Stevens. Every time I hear his report I am more and more amazed at what he does for the town and Recreation Department. I haven't gone onto the Recreation Department website so I didn't know they were giving Yoga classes. I am wondering what the status is on the Reginald Thiboutot property on Village Street. Mr. Eldridge said an appeal has been filed with Superior Court and the date on that is mid-November. You can give me a call tomorrow and I can give you the date if you want. I have those documents in my office.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said I am totally in favor of the water bond. Can you give me an estimate on what the impact will be on our taxes? Councilor Bowie said its pretty nil; close to no real impact. Part of the water bond is funded by the Water Department through the water users. The rest of the bond falls under the town side and then based on the way it's broken down over the 30 years and 10 years. You know over 10 years for \$320,000 is a pretty small amount of money compared to your mil rate, which is worth right about now around \$370,000 per mil. You could break that down into chunks to whatever a quarter of that would be so it's a very small impact on the tax rate. Mrs. Fitzgerald said, and yet, this is going to make a very big impact on the town's water users. Councilor Bowie said the trails will, also, be a huge benefit to the town and the water will be a great benefit on Upland Road and will help future developers put more into the community and we will be getting ourselves out of the contamination issue on Route 9 for the wells from Frost Hill Avenue to Upland.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said I know recommendations were on every article at town meeting, however, the voters use their own discretion and vote their conscience. Councilor Mason said that's right.

Andrea Murrillo said I would like to correct Mr. Eldridge. It won't go to court in mid-November. We have 40 days to file a brief. You have 30 days to answer and then the motions and pleading go. It's going to be quite a while in court. I would like to ask you about the Freedom of Information Act and I would like to know what the status is on that. Mr. Eldridge said all that information is being compiled. Some of it is coming from the attorney because we don't have some of that documentation here. Some of the material is being put together at the Town Clerk's office, some of the material is not available and we don't have it.

Andrea Murillo said I was, also, told that your engineer doesn't have a background and I would like to know if that is true. Mr. Eldridge said he is a certified engineer and he graduated from the University of Maine.

Ms. Murillo said we had two meetings scheduled, one on the 5th and one on the 15th. We came to both and the town didn't meet with us. I would like to know why. Mr. Eldridge said those meetings were cancelled by our attorney and I don't have the specifics on why he cancelled them. He just called and asked if we could change the date so there must have been a conflict of some sort.

Ms. Murillo said I am upset that two meetings have been set and nobody has shown for this. I don't understand that; we gave up our whole day to come here. It seems like you could have met with us. You have met with us before and we've always showed up to our meetings. It was July 30th that you asked us to meet with you. In December we met with you over to the house. We were always there. If there is another meeting I would ask respectfully that the town meet with us. Thank you.

Richard Main said Title 30 has something to say about articles and ballot questions in regards to advisors putting their information on it regarding their approval. I think the Council is supposed to put on there whether they approve of it or not and State law dictates that if there is a budget committee or board that their recommendation is supposed to be put beside it.

Mr. Main said I want to speak tonight about a couple of the bond issues because I think they are important for the residents of Lisbon. I see a number of vehicles at the Sabattus River parking lot indicating that people aren't driving at 6:30 AM in the morning from Topsham to use it. The extension of that trail is from that parking lot and under the road and follows the river down to the State of Maine's park and ride by the Railroad Restaurant & Pub. I think this project is for the residents. It's not like the bond issue to replace the Public Works building, that's an indirect benefit. This is a direct benefit to the employees of the community; however, this directly gives a benefit to all of the residents. I see wheelchairs and strollers and I think that it will be used more by residents when the extension is added to what is already there. I would encourage the taxpayers to approve it. I heard that people are quite angry that it's being brought up again. I think that this bond is too

important to let anger control your vote. This will impact the community for the next ten years. I would encourage people to remember that the greatest benefit is directly to the residents.

Mr. Main said part of the water bond is required by the state and we have to do it. Its not an option. We have to provide potable water. The other part is really a reaffirmation of a vote from the 2004 Town Meeting to extend the water lines up Upland Road and down Ridge Road to provide a second water supply to 60% of the rate payers served by the Water Department. That hasn't changed and I think it's even more important simply because five years has pasted and the cost is going to be borne by the rate payers instead of the town residents.

APPOINTMENTS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Eldridge said we have pretty much the same candidates. We put this up on the community board and didn't get any response. There didn't seem to be any interest in that so we put these back before you to appoint those who are interested.

Councilor Wells said I have a question about one of them and I am not against this person serving on the committee; it appears she doesn't live here but owns a business and works here. Councilor Bowie said that's true of a couple. This is a community development advisory committee made up of residents and business owners as part of the revitalization program and residency is not required.

Councilor Cote said isn't it clearly written in our charter that you have to be a resident to serve on our boards or committees. Councilor Bowie said I don't think our charter spells this out. I just don't see anything here about committees. I recommend we go forward with the vote with the stipulation that we validate it with the Town Attorney.

VOTE (2009-155B) Councilor Wells, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to appoint Kris Cornish, De-nin Lee, Brenda Rogers, and Jody Durisko with the understanding that this vote is not valid if it is determined that residency is a requirement. **Order passed - Vote 6-0.**

Mr. Eldridge said it may be in the Administrative Ordinance, but that's not something we have right here tonight so we will have to research that. Councilor Bowie asked for an answer on this sometime this week.

COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Cote said in the past week the Water Department and the Council met in a joint meeting to try to work through issues that we may have and going forward it is possible that Councilor Wells will be probably not with us after November, and possibly or not you will be and this meeting was with two Councilors who have a possibility of not being here; has that aspect been looked at for the next meeting? Councilor Bowie said we, also, have a Water Department Commissioner who is potentially not going to be with us. Our goal was to try and Mr. Bauer had recommended at our workshop was to get through this stuff in 60 days so that it was resolved and working on a track. So we are going to try to do that within the timeframe before officers change. Councilor Cote said I just didn't want officers to change and then have to go back to ground zero and start all over. Councilor Wells said the committee's goal is to, hopefully, within the next couple of weeks, come to some agreements between the Council and the committee to bring back to vote so that they can both move together harmoniously for all years to come.

Councilor Wells said I have been asked if I am going to stay on the Facilities Committee and, because we have already been at it for over six months, they have asked if I will remain on that and

I told them that was a question that had to be proposed to the Council after the first December meeting as to whether you wanted me to stay on that committee or not. We do have one other Councilor on that committee.

Councilor Bowie said I would like to give kudos to the Police Department for their quick apprehension of the suspect in the bank robbery that we had and last week I think they did a fine job addressing that situation and keeping it under control. I, also, want to see if we want to bring the auditor back for a short televised meeting on the summary report based on what we were given in our workshop. Mr. Eldridge said I asked her to attend this meeting, but she said this of course is her busy time and she will get back to me as soon as she can. Councilor Bowie said I just want to have something more on the record than our workshop for what the report from our auditor was.

Councilor Bowie said I want to let people know that so far we have had requests for 334 absentee ballots, 221 have been returned. We, also, have additional information from the state on their referendum questions and that anyone who hasn't returned their absentee ballot can come in and see the Town Clerk to get that additional information. Also, it is against the law for us to issue absentee ballots through regular email, but we do have a link on our website under the Town Clerk's Election page to the state's secure on-line email absentee ballot request form and once you fill that out you will get an absentee ballot in the mail so if that makes things easier for people.

Councilor Bowie said the last thing I have is that the Ricker Trail work will begin next week. The state permits have all been received and everything is ready to go on that.

Mrs. Lycette said Councilor Bowie I wanted to ask the Council a quick question tonight and that is do you feel that you would like to offer Saturday hours prior to the Election for residents to come in to cast their absentee ballot. We have done this in the past. When it was mandatory for the registrar to hold office hours on the Saturday prior to Election Day we allowed absentee balloting and sold hunting licenses. It's no longer a requirement, but would it be a convenience to the voters to be open a couple of hours. Councilor Wells said do we have enough time to advertise it to make it worthwhile. Councilor Henry said just posting it on the electronic sign out front should help. This would be good for our students who don't get home Friday night in time to come in and get their absentee ballot. Mr. Eldridge said residents do read the board out front. Councilor Crafts said we could put it on the board and on the website, but it's a little late. Mrs. Lycette said we will have absentee ballots to put into alphabetical order that day so we will be working behind the scenes anyway. Council agreed to open from 9AM to noon.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - NONE

ADJOURNMENT

VOTE (2009-156) Councilor Wells, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to adjourn at 8:29 P.M.
Order passed - Vote 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Twila D. Lycette, Council Secretary
Town Clerk, Lifetime CCM