



**TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 2, 2010**

Michael Bowie, Chair District 2 2012
Gina Mason, Vice Chair District 1 2010
Fern Larochele, Jr., At Large 2010
Roger Cote, At large 2011
Mark Lunt, District 1 2012
Dale Crafts, District 2 2010
Lori Pomelow, At Large 2012

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 Bowie, Mason, Crafts, Larochele, Cote, and Lunt. Councilor Pomelow was excused. Also present were Stephen Eldridge, Town Manager; David Brooks, Police Chief; Michael Cote, Code Enforcement Officer; W. Pat Dow, Assessor; Budget Advisory Board Members Don Fellows, Richard Graham, and Dorothy Fitzgerald; Michelle Swatsworth-Turmelle, Ethics Committee; School Board Members Janice Chizmar, Kathy Yergin, and Prudence Grant; and approximately 16 citizens in the audience.

PUBLIC HEARING

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing. Mr. Eldridge said these are just updates to bring the Subdivision Ordinances and other ordinances up to compliance with our Comprehensive Plan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing.

SITE PLAN ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing.

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW ORDINANCE

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing. Mr. Eldridge said this is in compliance with your Charter. You are to have a Board of Assessors; you must have an ordinance to follow. This was drafted by our attorney. It is pretty straightforward.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing.

CONSENT AGENDA

VOTE (2010-34) Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to approve the minutes of February 2, 2010. **Order passed – Vote 6-0.**

COUNCIL ORDERS, RESOLUTIONS, & ORDINANCES

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

(First Reading)

VOTE (2010-35) Councilor Mason, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to pass the first reading on the Subdivision Ordinance amendments.

Councilor Bowie said okay Council; this is the first reading on this ordinance. This is bringing us in line with the Comprehensive plans. I believe the Planning Board has looked at it and approved it. Mr. Cote said both the Site Plan and the Subdivision Amendments have been through the Planning Board. Councilor Bowie said so the Planning Board has reviewed and approved these changes. This is our first reading. If Council has questions on this without major changes, we can continue to go forward with the second reading. If there are major changes it will probably have to go back through the whole process again.

Councilor Larochelle said could I ask Mike, from the original readings of ordinances of what they had to be adapted to go along with the new program; were there many changes with either ordinance. Reading them it is tough to know what it really means.

Mr. Cote said on the Subdivision Ordinances there were a lot more definitions added to the ordinance itself. If you will indulge me a minute, I will show you the difference between the new ordinance and what the original looked like so you will have a better picture. Councilor Bowie said before you go through that Mike, I understand that the ordinance we have in front of us all the new additions are underlined and everything that was deleted is stricken out, so you can see the changes that were made to the existing ordinance.

Mr. Eldridge said and there are statements in parentheses why it was; some of these are to comply with State law and some of them are just clarifications. Councilor Cote said are there any highlighted things that we should be visiting or that should be brought to our attention.

Mr. Cote said I don't believe so, as Councilor Bowie was saying, there are a lot of deletions, but there are a lot more additions. It gives us a better tool to work with. Councilor Bowie said I don't know about the Council, but I read through it and it is very thorough. It was done, in my mind, very well. Mr. Eldridge said our attorney has seen this also; he is comfortable with it. On some of the road, material compaction, and stuff like that Public Works and the Town Engineer reviewed that and made comments, so they are all comfortable with the changes as well.

Councilor Bowie said are there any additional comments from Council on this; any comments from the public?

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Order passed – Vote 6-0.

SITE PLAN ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS
(First Reading)

VOTE (2010-36) Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to accept the first reading of the Site Plan Ordinance amendments.

Councilor Bowie said that this is another one that has been updated to comply with the Comprehensive Plan. It has been reviewed and approved by the Planning Board. Mr. Cote said the Site Plan was reviewed in the past month. Mr. Eldridge sat on that Board while I was out sick. Councilor Bowie said comments from Council, comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Dot Fitzgerald said I vowed I was not going to say anything tonight, but the Legislature, and I am sure Dale is aware of this, there are new culvert rules that the State is proposing that are going to be very cost probative to a lot of towns. I am wondering if this comes under the Site Plan Ordinance amendment. I have a copy of the rules here and an example of what it cost one town to replace a culvert and what it would cost if they had to comply with the new rules and regulations that the State is proposing.

Councilor Crafts said I actually read some stuff on that today up in Augusta. The bill was watered down so that now the municipalities only have to, when they put a culvert in or when they replace culverts, go to a new standard of how they do it. They are not going to have to replace all the culverts like a lot of people wanted originally. The original bill was to replace them, but when they do replace them, it has to go through a certain standard so the fish can swim through it and spawn back and forth either way.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said okay, does this apply to driveways and subdivisions. Councilor Crafts said no, this is just for areas where there would be trout or fish that want to cross over roads, or where a brook goes through, and places where fish can spawn.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said the Maine Association of Realtors is asking us to contact our Legislators and urge them to vote no on this. Councilor Crafts said you could have a culvert in your driveway on a piece of real estate that a brook goes through or some body of water that they could spawn in, but it was watered down to the point where only when it has to be replaced or for new construction, that it has to meet the new standard. So, to answer your question, I don't think it is going to have any impact on us at all at this point. Mr. Fitzgerald said, hopefully, not. I really urge you to vote no on it.

Councilor Bowie said any more discussion, comments from Council, the public.

Order passed - Vote 6-0.

BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW
(First Reading)

VOTE (2010-37) Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to accept the first reading of the Board of Assessment Review Ordinance.

Councilor Bowie said is this the ordinance that our Board of Assessment has to follow. Mr. Eldridge said that is correct. This is the procedure, terms, their duties, and powers that we will use when we start down that road to the re-val. It is good to have those.

Councilor Larochelle said with this ordinance is there any State guidance that has to be followed. Mr. Eldridge said, yes, you have State law that you have to follow. It is State Law Title 30-A.

Councilor Larochelle said it pretty much follows. Mr. Eldridge said it follows State procedure, yes. If somebody has an appeal on an assessed value, this is the first body that they would go to. This body decides if the appeal is valid or not. If they reject the appeal, they still have another step they can go do.

Councilor Larochelle said this ordinance pretty much puts into place our requirements and will meet the state's requirements. Mr. Eldridge said, yes, and the Charter. Councilor Cote said have we manned that Board yet. Mr. Eldridge said we appointed four people and we have two more applications to fill the last positions. We have some good people. It is encouraging.

Councilor Bowie said any other comments from Council, comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Order passed - Vote 6-0.

ROAD POSTING

VOTE (2010-38) Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Cote moved to accept the Road Posting presented for March 3, 2010 through May 1, 2010.

Mr. Eldridge said I think we are doing this a little earlier than normal. The posting is three weeks earlier due to the odd weather that we have been having. The roads are in pretty rough shape. We are hoping to post these this week some time.

Councilor Bowie said is this the standard list of roads we have been doing on a regular basis. Mr. Eldridge said, yes. Mr. Beal said three or four of them have been newly rebuilt and I want to keep them that way. Councilor Larochelle said I don't think you could hurt Route 9 anymore, could you?

Councilor Cote said do you feel Buttons that the road postings, this is as good a time as any to bring this up, that the calcium that is being used now keeps the top layer of road from freezing and that is why it is pushing up and breaking up our roads so bad. Because the roads everywhere you go, even on your major highways are all stove up. Mr. Beal said it is a necessary evil Roger. People in town are used to having the roads bare. We used to be able to do it with standard salt. Calcium, yes, like the salt, it gets down into the cracks in the roads which doesn't let the immediate surface under the road freeze and, yes, that does cause a lot of damage, to be honest with you. Councilor Cote said are you saying that salt just doesn't cut it anymore. Mr. Beal said, it will, but you are going to have to answer my phone.

Councilor Cote said it just feels like we are fighting a losing battle. Mr. Beal said the other part of that is the DEP is now involved. They are saying sand is becoming toxic to the catch basins, which goes into the rivers and causes silt. Sooner or later it is going to cost money to get rid of the sand that I sweep up every spring.

Councilor Larochelle said is that why you see a lot of places very active in sealing all the cracks in the roads, just to try to keep the calcium from getting into the cracks. Mr. Beal said yes it is, but that is, also, a very expensive measure for very little outcome as far as longevity goes. Mr. Eldridge said it keeps the moisture from getting in there.

Councilor Cote said simple for roads that have been rebuilt recently like the bypass in Topsham through Brunswick that is all stove to pieces. It is potholes and all broke up badly.

Mr. Beal said I don't know what the answer is, I just do the best I can right now. There are more products out there than calcium. Again, it is costly. They make stuff even out of molasses that they say is better, but at what price. Councilor Larochelle said any of the products that will melt ice won't keep it from freezing.

Councilor Bowie said any other questions from Council on the Road Postings.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Order passed - Vote 6-0.

FUEL BIDS

Mr. Eldridge said Cathy Mesmer, the business director from the school, and I partnered this year to put out fuel bids. We had four companies bid our fuel, #2 fuel kerosene, diesel, and propane. They gave us a fixed price and a variable price. Both of these prices are good until March 9, which is when the School Department will have voted on it and they will hold that price only until then. It is a very volatile market, as we all well know. They are over last year's number in all areas. We were paying \$2.14 for our fuel last year. It is \$2.59 for most of it. What is your pleasure? We do have a local company and she is here tonight as their representative from Downeast Energy. We have been doing business with them for many years, both the school and the town; they are a bit on the higher side, in some areas. We do lean towards our local business people more so.

Councilor Bowie said comments from Council. Councilor Larochelle said is this with the two combined, any idea what the gallons is. Mr. Eldridge said it's a pretty large volume of fuel, combined. The school fills up with a tanker truck, we don't. We fill up with a regular panel truck, because we don't need the capacity that the school does. I think they have a 10,000 gallon tank. Councilor Larochelle said I guess my question would be, is there a minimum with the two, did we give a guaranteed amount of fuel. Mr. Eldridge said, yes, we have to guarantee the amount of fuel that we use, so we give them what our usage is each time we put it out to bid.

Councilor Crafts said I think it is important that we know the usage and can calculate the difference in the prices. Obviously we are trying to find all the money we can this year in trying to meet the budget. I want to see it go to a local business, also, but we are in an awful hard situation this year. I don't know what the usage is, but what kind of dollar amount is it going to cost the taxpayer to give it to a local business, or at least consider it.

Councilor Larochelle said one of the things that I actually looked at, Dale, is that they are able to take us through pretty much all of our needs, versus another company, which is pretty much doing it with a fixed amount. Again, I don't know how much of a role that plays, but hopefully in the big scheme of things, it might have a benefit for all. There are fuels that if we went with one aspect of it, I'm not sure if that would change the bid process. Steve maybe can answer that, if we went with one vendor for the heating fuel and the rest from Downeast, does that actually change the bidding. Mr. Eldridge said you can break it up any way you like. If you want to buy your #2 heating fuel from Downeast, but your kerosene from Dead River, that is your choice.

Councilor Larochelle said I wasn't sure if these bids were based on us buying all of it. Mr. Eldridge said, no. He said the bid, let's just take a look at the number under fixed price, you are talking one cent less between Dead River and Downeast, you're talking pretty equitable on Irving and Downeast. Webber, who is out of Lewiston or Auburn, is quite a bit less, but they didn't bid on anything else. I found that a little odd, but they sent us what they sent us. On the kerosene from Downeast it's less.

Councilor Larochelle said diesel is actually, the price that they give for diesel is a very respectable price, because diesel is absolutely quite a bit higher than that, just recently.

Councilor Crafts said so nobody has the figures on how much #2 heating oil we use. Mr. Eldridge said they bid on the quantities that we use. Councilor Crafts said so if we broke this up, maybe they wouldn't stick to this price. Mr. Eldridge said oh no, you decide whoever you choose to go with and the School Department has to vote on Monday night, they can choose who they like. We bid these together to try to get a better price, because we have a larger quantity. Whether that works or not, I don't know.

Councilor Bowie said then the question becomes, we bid this for the school, now let's just say, Council says we are going to go with Downeast for #2 heating fuel and the school says, no, I'm going for Webber Energy. Now, your volume has changed. Does that make your bids null and void, because your volumes have changed?

Mr. Eldridge said they actually did it by the building, each group. When we look at the bids today, they laid out each building and gave us a price on the quantity for that building, so they are bidding individual buildings. Councilor Bowie said so if I looked at, because I don't have the information in front of me, if I looked at the Library building, I'm going to get \$2.597 from Downeast Energy, for MTM, for the Library, for the Town Office, they are all the same numbers for every town building. Mr. Eldridge said, yes, and they were the same for all the School buildings.

Councilor Bowie said I guess my question is, and I'm not trying to put any one of our participants on the hot seat, but let's say the town is using 20,000 gallons and the school is using 20,000 gallons, right. I think, where Dale is going is if the town goes for Downeast for 20,000 and the school goes with Webber for 20,000, does the \$2.59 still stand. Mr. Eldridge said yes. Councilor Bowie said even though we have decreased our volume by half of what they bill. Mr. Eldridge said there is nothing in the bid specs forcing anybody to lock in to specific companies for specific stuff.

Councilor Crafts said so it isn't volume, it is per billing so that answers that. We don't have to approve this tonight. I would like to see a breakdown on each building and see what the numbers are. I would like to see how much we can save or what the difference is going to cost us, because we really don't have enough information.

Councilor Lunt said we really need to know the absolute usage. It would be worth going with a local company if it's a couple of thousand dollars more, not \$20,000. Councilor Cote said not only that, but I would be curious to know if we definitely went with one company if we would drastically save by joining the school, because of the whole volume.

Mr. Eldridge said the bid price wasn't any different for the school or the town. They gave this price for all of our buildings. There is no change in what the school is getting for a price for their buildings compared to what we are getting for our buildings.

Councilor Cote said what are we gaining by joining with the school. Mr. Eldridge said unless we compare doing it separately, we don't know that at this point. Let me give you an example. Last year the school put their bid out before us. They got a lower price than we did from the same company. Okay, so, yes there is a difference. Whether you do it separately or at the same time, it really depends upon the market and what they are buying it for, because that's how they price it. If you don't do it together you may not get the savings, because we didn't last year, we paid more. They were paying \$2.09 a gallon for #2 heating fuel and we paid \$2.14, that's a big difference.

Councilor Larochelle said that is a timing issue. Mr. Eldridge said, well, I don't know, I think it is a market issue more than anything else.

Councilor Crafts said now you are telling me something completely different from what you said earlier. You said it was per building and now you are saying. Mr. Eldridge said that is how they did it, per building.

Councilor Crafts said this is not making any sense whatsoever. If there is a total volume and they are bidding on the total volume, because they are saving money. Mr. Eldridge said to be honest with you, I can't tell you they are bidding on the volume. The volume is larger. If you want to know the exact answer to that question, I guess, you would have to ask the dealer; do you get a better price when you buy volume.

Mary Ann Adams, the Downeast Energy representative, said I would be happy to answer some of your questions. Mr. Eldridge said this is how the bid specs go. Mrs. Adams said we certainly looked at the volume. I think it behooves the town to go jointly. This year each one was lined out for us. Two of the competitors gave you prices by building. Two of the competitors responded with a letter by price with no disclaimer, so I would assume it is like you said for every building. All of us, maybe except one, gave the disclaimer. I have 24 hours on this bid and I gave you the disclaimer that maybe I may need to adjust the prices on March 9 depending upon the volatility of the market. It could go either way, but as of the closing bell today, it was up.

Councilor Crafts said I have a question. We approve the town side and they approve the school side and it is two different companies, it doesn't affect the pricing, so it really isn't volume.

Mrs. Adams said I will stand by it, because I listed it by building. Next year we would probably say we withhold the right to accept or reject any building determined by how you put it out. One of the other things I am going to stand here and say is, I am a local company. We do register vehicles here in town. We do have lots of employees who live here in town. I believe you have a local buying preference ordinance. I believe you put that in when you built this building.

Councilor Crafts said my next question is, if we get together with the school and decide we want to put all of our volume with you, does that get us a better price. Mrs. Adams said that is exactly what we did this year. I gave the same price to every building.

Councilor Bowie said what I heard is that if we go separate ways, the town and the school, next year when she bids it based on that, she is going to put a qualifier in the contract that says I'm going to change my bid based on your volume change. But she is saying, this year she will honor it, because she did it by building this way, not knowing that the school and the town may deviate from who they go with.

Mrs. Adams said not everybody filled out the same template. You may have some general assistance accounts that get 50-gallon deliveries on the same day notice or you may have an 8,000-gallon drop at the high school. So, we sort of look at everything and factor that in. We did it by product; so much for #2, kerosene, diesel, and propane.

Councilor Crafts said I say if we have the 10% local preference in there, it is obvious that we need to go with Downeast Energy. Mr. Eldridge said we have had a very good working relationship with Downeast Energy. Councilor Cote I don't think there was a company indiscretion here, or anything of that nature, I think we are just trying to understand the bidding process. Councilor Crafts said I don't have any problem with that, I understand now, thank you. Councilor Bowie said additional comments from Council, discussion, comments from the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Michelle Swatsworth-Turmelle asked was the bidding process open or was this done closed. Councilor Bowie said, no, it was open to the public. It happened at 2:00 today.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said, no, the competitors that submitted their bids. Mr. Eldridge said we have a list of suppliers throughout the region. We send out every year a list to whoever the company is from Bangor, Portland, or whoever wants in on it. Not everybody responds back. This

is the first year I have seen Irving on the list, but the school department has had different people apply or put their bid in and that's why we saw somebody different this year. Last year I think it was only Downeast and Dead River that submitted bids.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said I think you are misunderstanding what I am asking. She commented during her statement about how other competitors bid, the breakdown of how they bid. If she is a competitor bidding, how does she know how those other competitors bid? She should only have knowledge of how her own bid, right?

Mr. Eldridge said they were open publicly today at 2:00. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said that is what I was trying to find out. How did the other competitors know? Councilor Bowie said it was open at 2:00 for everyone to examine all the bids. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said, alright, that is what I was trying to find out how that came about, because normally we don't hear one competitor talking about how another competitor bid, so some of us were just wondering how that knowledge would come out.

Councilor Bowie said not all the people go to the bid openings either. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said, right, which is why it is helpful for everybody to have an understanding of that, so I apologize.

Councilor Bowie said any other comments.

Mr. Bauer said is the Water Department able to purchase fuel through these bids, because we use between 3,000 to 4,000 gallons of propane per year and I would just like to know whether we can get in on that or not. Mr. Eldridge said once they award the bid we can ask the contractor if they can honor that same price for the Water Department. Mr. Bauer said any negotiating we have done in the past we have done independently, because we do not buy fuel oil anymore, we only buy propane. Councilor Bowie said we can look into that.

Councilor Larochelle said I would actually like to make a motion for a few different reasons, but to go along with Downeast Energy for the heating, kerosene, diesel, and propane. I think this year we have been prompting Steve and the School Department to work together to try to purchase as a unit. If you deal with the crisis that the scale goes cross and if you give, the local business preference discount as far as the bidding process goes, it does come across lower. The diesel, I believe, actually is a pretty fair price for what I have seen for diesel. I think it is not going to be much cheaper than this. If anybody has been buying diesel lately, it is up around \$3.00 a gallon price and that price is not unusual. I would hope as we move forward, with any town process, with anybody that we are purchasing from, because the town, any side we look at, it is all coming out of the same pocket, whether it is Town, School, or Water Department. I really hope that we would put any bidding option together and the amount that you would use hopefully that could be worked into a bid, because again anytime you can save money buying as a bulk, I think that is the key thing to go with. Fixed, yes, I really don't want to guess as time goes by, especially on a lot of these. If they seem higher than last year, they are definitely less than they were 2 or 3 years ago when we were looking at \$4.00 or \$4.50 so even though their prices are up from last year they are definitely down from what they were a couple of years ago.

VOTE (2010-39) Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to accept the fixed price bid from Downeast Energy for #2 heating fuel, kerosene, diesel, and propane with the hopes that the School would actually follow the same idea.

Councilor Bowie said any further discussion.

Order passed - Vote 6-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Eldridge said we will talk a little bit about Route 9 and one aspect. Mr. Bauer and I were invited to talk with Governor Baldacci's chief of staff, Jane Lincoln. In that meeting was Commissioner David Cole from MDOT, along with their attorney and several other representatives from MDOT. I thought we had a very good dialogue. I think we got some very good clarifications on the spending split. We talked about the 90% that the town would pay and the 10% that MDOT would pay. In the end the MDOT contribution is probably going to be higher. At the end of the meeting without asking them to give specifics about what they were contributing, they kept saying it was a higher amount than 10%. They will provide us with that breakdown and, hopefully, it shakes out with their doing better than this 90% 10% split. I thought it was a good meeting. I want to thank Mr. Bauer for attending; it is good to have one person in the room I knew.

Mr. Eldridge said Rick Green, the Superintendent, and I sat down last Friday. We had some very good dialogue about where our budget process is and what we are looking at. Rick and I, again, are facing some very serious revenue shortfalls, along with the climbing health care costs, one of the things that we are going to continue to do is work together to try to find ways to save money, as we will with the Water District. One of the things we thought, after we do our budget presentations on March 16 is to sit down with the Council and the School Committee and just talk openly about what is best for the Town of Lisbon. I think that we as a group and the School Committee need to look at what is best for the Town of Lisbon. We are both facing some very serious dilemmas. If that is okay, I will have Rick talk to the School Committee and we will coordinate a day, maybe on one of the off weeks, and see what we can do to really bang out the numbers and see where we are.

Mr. Eldridge said tonight we sat down, Ryan, I, and our new Finance Director, Jessica Maloy. We met with the Water Commissioners and Paul Adams. We are looking for ways we can work together to save money. We are all facing cost increases and we are reaching out to each other. I think that is a very positive thing.

Mr. Eldridge said during the meeting Rick and I talked about putting out a survey to taxpayers. We collaborated on that and came up with questions that both pertain to the school and also pertain to the town and we put it on our website and we hope the public who is watching will go to our website and take this survey and answer these questions. There is a section there for comments and recommendations. We need some guidance. It would be nice to hear from the public to find out exactly what they think about what direction we should go. The school is looking at cuts, we are looking at cuts, and it is going to have major impacts on services and education for our children. Take a look and weigh in if you are a citizen.

Mr. Eldridge said the Thiboutot property on Village Street, just to bring you up to date on that. That has been going back and forth through the courts. It is still going back and forth through the courts. Our attorney was called in by a judge. He has been inundated with documents the same as we have. That updated him where we were and there is still a court date being set where the judge will make some final rulings, but he has advised Mr. Thiboutot to get an attorney versus trying to do this on his own. We don't know if that is what he is doing or not.

Mr. Eldridge said that last Thursday Chief Brooks was invited to present to prior Selectmen meetings in Leeds, Greene, and Turner, which they do that quarterly, and they wanted to get an update just as he did for this Council and other communities on the dispatch. He had quite a full room of Selectmen from both communities and other people who weren't elected officials to listen to where we were in the process. Commissioner Greenwood was there, and also Commissioner Labonte was there. They had put off their vote to make recommendations as we had thought they would the prior Monday and they wanted to wait until everybody had the chance to weigh in from the different communities. He said they met on this Monday in Turner. I just, kind of off the

agenda, but I would him as part of my report, to update you on what happened yesterday so you will have a clear understanding from the Chairman of that committee exactly what transpired.

Chief Brooks said that yesterday the Androscoggin Regional Communications Center Study Committee met for approximately two and a half hours at the Turner town office. Bringing you up to date from when we last met at workshop, we talked about that, this project. We now have had nine meetings as a committee. The quad-town meeting that Mr. Eldridge is referring to that I was asked to give the same report that I gave to you folks here at our workshop that was attended by the Boards of Selectmen from Leeds, Greene, Turner, and Sabattus. I believe that when we had our workshop here there was one selectman here from Sabattus at that meeting. I think that at least three of them were there. I didn't know all the players. I gave them the same update that I gave you folks as to where the committee's work was at that time. If you recall at our workshop, as I was giving the report, I was trying to stay away from telling the people present at that meeting what my recommendation was going to be as a member of that committee, because the whole committee had still not gotten to the point where we were going to make that final vote. I know that the Fire Chief from Lewiston and the Police Chief in Auburn gave the same updated reports to their respective City Councils and they did the same. I attended the Lewiston City Council meeting and as they were giving their presentation, they did not come right out and indicate as to which proposal they were going to be recommending.

Chief Brooks said the troublesome thing that occurred at the quad meeting of those four towns, and it was a packed room, is that Commissioner Labonte attended that meeting. Commissioner Labonte is a member of this committee. During the meeting, he told those selectmen from those four towns that he was going to be recommending the entire dispatch function go to Lewiston/Auburn. He went on further and told those selectmen from those four towns that if it was decided not to go to Lewiston/Auburn that Lewiston/Auburn could sue the county for that service. I don't know if that was a strong-arm tactic, I don't know what it was. Here you have a member of a committee, who is supposed to be still neutral until the committee gets to that position, yet he announces his position, then goes a step further, and says and if you don't, this could happen to you or to us. I just sat there in total disbelief that that had occurred. It was not my meeting; I was invited, so I couldn't really say what I wanted to say at the time. I am giving you this report tonight, because I am comfortable doing it. At our meeting, yesterday all three commissioners were there, so I don't have to wait and hold off on my final report to the commissioners, because they were all present when the vote was taken so they already know what the outcome is. I am not breaking any rules here now by telling the Lisbon Town Council what happened yesterday.

Chief Brooks said we got to the vote on what to do with the communications for the county, what our recommendations would be. Eleven people on the committee. One of those now, remember the history here, Commissioner Labonte, as the other two commissioners wanted a non-political committee. I had this discussion with you when we had the workshop; they wanted just the users to form this committee, the fire and police personnel from across the county to work on this with no political influence. But when the process began, Commissioner Labonte got himself appointed to the committee, because the reason being that the commissioners made the committee, so he felt a commissioner should be on it.

Chief Brooks said at the October 19 meeting Commissioner Labonte brought everybody up to date as to what the resolution was from the county commissioners to the committee and what their task was. He indicated that the short-term goal for fixing the dispatch situation in the county included the sheriff's department, Livermore Falls, and Lisbon. The long-term goal would be at some point in time to incorporate the entire county into a unified dispatch. At the October 26 meeting Commissioner Labonte now states that Lisbon is not an option, that Lisbon is not expandable, so Lisbon was no longer an option in the process where a week before we were part of the group.

Chief Brooks said also at the October 26 meeting I, as chair, created two subcommittees to do further work, one of which was governance to develop the bylaws for this Communications Center. The

Lewiston/Auburn representatives on the committee offered up the opportunity to have the county merge with Lewiston/Auburn. I created a subcommittee to study that proposal and Commissioner Labonte volunteered to be a member of that committee.

Chief Brooks said on the November 9 meeting, again, we were having discussions on short-term and long-term, and now Commissioner Labonte says that Lisbon was not and never was a part of the short-term plan. This just, well most of you know me pretty well, and I popped on that one. I asked him how can you at the third meeting of this committee after the first meeting you said we were, now at the third meeting you say we are not, where is that coming from. He didn't respond. The other committee people present made it clear that Lisbon was part of the original short-term plan.

Chief Brooks said now February 18, we had gone through the holidays, and things had slowed down a bit. On February 18, Commissioner Labonte sends an email to all the committee members. Now remember here at the very beginning the Commissioners wanted to keep politics out of this. Here I am talking to the Town Council, but the Commissioners wanted to keep politics out of this process. They just wanted the users, the fire, and police personnel to work on this. Commissioner Labonte sends an email: just putting this out for consideration, as I can understand that for some Chiefs, selecting a recommendation may put them in an uncomfortable political situation and that I don't believe the commissioners intended we ask each of you as customers to serve on this committee.

Chief Brooks said being the Chairman of the committee that these commissioners appointed me to and prior to my appointment they asked my Town Manager if I would do it and he said, yes I would, so there I was. I responded to Commissioner Labonte's email: Commissioner Labonte, I cannot speak for all of the members of the committee however, I do not believe that the chiefs of the municipal departments who sit on the committee are concerned about being put into an uncomfortable political position. As for the county employees on the committee (and there are two- the sheriff and the EMA director), I have worked with both of them for many years and I trust that they will not let the political climate affect their decision. However, I am concerned that they have now been put into this uncomfortable political position as a result of this email sent by you, an Androscoggin County Commissioner.

Chief Brooks said shortly after I sent this out he sent an email out apologizing, he didn't mean to do it. Well, he had already planted the seed. Like I said, then we had our meeting in Leeds and Turner after this and this is when he then says this is what he is going to do and he tells everybody that Lewiston and Auburn can sue us if we don't. Then we come to our meeting yesterday. I decided as the Chairman, that seeing that the county commissioners got me into this mess, that I would let the county commissioner speak first. So I asked Mr. Labonte to give his position first, and he did. It was very short, which was his first choice was to go to L/A and if that didn't work then his second choice was to come to Lisbon. Chief Brooks said then I went right down the roster. The two county employees that sit on that committee, both of them their first choice was to come to Lisbon. Their second choice, and when I say first choice/second choice I mean short-term/long-term, short-term is a five year window to fix what is going on now with the county, because they cannot do anything with that county building. All of you who know what is going on up there, they can't do anything with that county building, but they have got to do something with their call center. Both of the county employees recommended that the short-term fix was to come to Lisbon and that the long-term fix was to unify a joint effort at a later date down the road.

Chief Brooks said the final tally was one member, short-term was to stay with the county, long-term was to unify countywide. Four members of the committee, one of which was Commissioner Labonte, voted to go to L/A. For three of them that was their only choice L/A. Six of the members of the committee all voted short-term fix was to come to Lisbon and that the long-term fix was trying to figure out a unified piece. Some of the points we raised, and I also raised it, was that, and again you folks are familiar with this, Androscoggin County, with the system as it is now, the

governing structure that they have up there, they are not ready to absorb the \$2.6 million dollar unified communications budget.

He said they had this idea of creating, as Mr. Bowie knows because he sat on the budget committee, they were going to create a separate department. At least one commissioner we know of, wanted us to move right into Auburn Central Fire Station's basement and have the county take over that operation. That total operation would cost about \$2,600,000 and at some point in time, that budget would be totally absorbed by the county. L/A was telling us, and this is unofficial, but we are being told from an L/A representative on the committee that L/A would continue to pay their flat rate as they are now, \$950,000 each for five years, but then after five years that is when the buy-now-pay-later, that's how that worked, in my opinion.

Chief Brooks said a quick summary: 6-4-1 was the recommendation to bring the short-term fix to Lisbon. The downside of this is now it goes to the county commissioners. There are only three county commissioners and you know how their districts are broken up. Some of you had asked at the workshop, how can you help, well, I think some of that is in your court now lobbying to make this work. I do want to add at the meeting in Leeds we got steered of course. Mr. Labonte steered the whole system off course and pretty much told everybody that the problems with the county government is the budget committee. He got everybody to believe that the problem with the county government is the budget committee and that they as commissioners have no authority to do anything. I didn't say anything, because it wasn't my place to say anything, but what is this man telling these people? That all occurred.

Chief Brooks said what is going to happen down the road, again. I have to give a report at a future date to the Commissioners. I expect there will be public hearings on that, according to Commissioner Greenwood, the Chairman, he did indicate that there were going to be public hearings on that. Commissioner Greenwood at the conclusion of yesterday's meeting did come up to me and told me that he would do everything he can to support that 6 vote majority, but again, as you know, he is a minority on that county commission, because of the way the districts are broken up. It is going to be a struggle.

Councilor Mason said just for the audience and for television, can you explain how the districts are broken up. Chief Brooks said our Commissioner, Randy Greenwood, represents the Towns of Lisbon, Sabattus, Wales, Turner, Greene, Leeds, Livermore, Livermore Falls, and Durham. The Durham representative on our committee, also, recommended it come to Lisbon in the short-term fix. Commissioner Labonte represents the City of Auburn, the Towns of Mechanic Falls, Minot, and Poland. Commissioner Marcus represents solely the City of Lewiston. There are three commissioners in Androscoggin County.

Councilor Bowie said I assume this will come out in the papers probably tomorrow. Chief Brooks said the press called me today. Mr. Eldridge said and the vote wasn't formal, right. Chief Brooks said no, the representative from Lewiston made a motion and the motion passed that my report to County Commissioners will basically be an open-ended document with no real direction or resolution. I have been thinking about how I am going to write that. I am sure I will find a way, put something in there and I know where you folks are on this. We are all on the same page. We just have to figure out how to get it done, but now it is going to be at the county level and that is going to be the struggle.

Councilor Bowie said please let us know when you are ready to present that final report and maybe as many of us that can attend will attend when you at least give that report and show some support. Chief Brooks said you are very familiar with that room the County Commissioners hold their meeting in. Councilor Bowie said yes I am. Chief Brooks said if everybody that is from Androscoggin County at your level wants to attend that meeting 90% of you would be in the hallway. Councilor Bowie said, right, but they can move that meeting up to the Library Law Room

where we hold the budget meeting. Chief Brooks said if it is available that day. We tried that before and Superior Court took it over.

Councilor Bowie said anything else to report Steve.

Mr. Eldridge said the Longchamps proposal is, basically, a discussion about the Route 9 project. K & K was the contractor that was awarded the bid through the State. The Water District work was not part of that bid process. We had asked them to give us an idea; we wouldn't hold their feet to the fire on, but to just give us an idea of the cost to install water pipe. They gave us the number of \$35 per foot. We would provide all the material, the pipe and extra stuff that goes in the ground. We met with K & K several weeks ago. They said they would get a price to us last week, which they did and it was more like \$40 per foot to install so Ryan in his due diligence went to their contractor that does a lot of their sewer and Water Department work, Longchamps, and asked them, can you give us a price. Ryan gave them the material costs. They did not have any insight into what our bid was from K & K. They came in around \$85,000 less. That kind of throws us in a quagmire, now you have two contractors working on the same site, but it's a local contractor. Nobody else in Lisbon has done these kinds of projects. Ryan and I have talked to the commissioners about it and I think we are all in agreement that we would like to have Longchamps do this. I have to go back to our attorney to make sure that everything is above board and transparent. Ryan figured it out and wants some guidance from the Council; we talked about the commissioners in terms of what direction you would recommend for us.

Councilor Cote said I think that is pretty self-explanatory. Mr. Eldridge said I have to hear it from you first.

Councilor Crafts said you are hearing it loud and clear. Go to the next move, talk to the attorney, and make sure that this can be done. If we can save \$85,000, I am on board. Councilor Cote said and I am too. Mr. Eldridge said the Water Commissioners said tonight that they are onboard as well. I will give Ryan the direction to pursue that.

Councilor Larochelle said just to be on the same page, when you are looking at Route 9 we are actually looking for what they are doing. There is a portion of pipes that they are not going to be reconstructing, I believe. They are not going all the way down to X-tra Mart so there is a portion, probably a $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile stretch of road that would be done that really wouldn't be overlapping anybody, right.

Mr. Eldridge said how it was laid out to us is that it starts at Frost Hill. Not being an excavator and knowing how the whole process works, you would assume that they would be tearing up the road and digging trenches to get all this work done. In fact, that is not how K & K plan to do it. They told us at the meeting that first they would dig down and that all the pipes would be laid for the water system and they would move up the road. Once we have certain sections done, then K & K would start, from the beginning and start ripping up the road and doing their work behind that. Any digging up below that or above that waterline would be done again. Listening to that it sounds like nobody is going to be in anybody's way, because the waterline is going to be done first. I think it makes, tax dollar wise and Longchamps has a very good history. They have done a lot of water and sewer projects before. They are the contractor that both departments use for any big work that we can't do.

Councilor Cote said their bid was very thorough. I was impressed with their bid that they submitted to the town. Councilor Bowie said they did it two ways. They did it without the material, which is the way we had it with K & K, because that way we could compare apples and

apples and then they gave us a bid with the materials. We are just looking at what we end up buying the material for, but I think based on what Ryan and the Water Department indicated, the price that they got for materials is probably as cheap as you can get it. Probably it makes sense for them to do it. Mr. Eldridge said we still have to meet with the MDOT to work out the logistics if this is the direction you want to go.

Councilor Larochelle said has the Upland Road project been awarded by any contractor yet. Councilor Bowie said, no, but there was some talk with the Water Commissioners about whether they can get the same price or better by either buying the material now or maybe looking at having them do that, but that is kind of on their nickel. Mr. Eldridge said MDOT has talked about that project and bidding that out as a whole package. That kind of puts us, in Ryan's opinion and I respect that, at their mercy, it takes it out of our control and gives it to MDOT. MDOT will always go with the cheapest, they have to by statute, go with the cheapest bidder as long as it is apples and oranges and everyone is capable of doing it. I think since the water project is our project, we can get it settled.

Mr. Bauer said I totally agree with what has been said. We discussed it and the only thing I brought up tonight when we were discussing, is if we can buy the pipe for Upland Road and get it cheaper or lock the price in, I think, this is the time to do it so that we are not paying more money for it down the road. If we can get a volume discount, which we don't know what that is, it makes sense to buy it now. It is just a matter of storing it until we can put the pipe in, which I understand is going to be this summer.

Councilor Bowie said so Council is okay if everything works out all right. I really think Council has the right to say we can go with Longchamps based on that. I just want to make sure we don't have to follow any additional bidding process or procedures so I recommend that we check with our attorney.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Richard Graham said I would like to speak to the topic that Chief Brooks was talking about. Now I am not knowledgeable on it as he is, but I have heard him speak on it a couple of times. I am just speaking as a citizen of Lisbon. For a process that in the beginning was designed to remain politic free it sure does seem like somebody is stirring the political bowl. When he breaks down the districts it makes it clear in my mind what is going on here. I got to just say I don't like seeing the Chief here steamrolled in the process, or the Town of Lisbon or anybody else. I would like to commend the Chief for his restraint with his frustration in this process, but if it were up to me I would tell him to forget about his restraining process and speak his mind whenever he needs to. Mr. Eldridge said, oh, he has done that.

Dot Fitzgerald said two things while Mr. Bauer is still here and the Route 9 project has been discussed. Has there been any progress in extending the water line up Route 9 beyond Upland Road to include some properties with contaminated wells? Mr. Eldridge said we had some discussion briefly on Friday with MDOT. I think there is going to be further discussion. They are talking about being able to drill wells versus extend the water line. I think what we need to do is look at what the cost is going to be; we haven't done that yet, to extend it up that far. If we are saving money by buying bulk and coming in at a better price, we might be able to do that. We don't know yet.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said if you drill wells is there any guarantee that the new wells won't be contaminated as well. Mr. Eldridge said that is my concern. They didn't seem to have an answer for that at MDOT. There will be more discussion. Councilor Lunt said as someone with a drilled well up there, we had to go down 400 feet to get water there, so it is not an easy spot. Mrs.

Fitzgerald said from my knowledge of properties up in that area, you have to go down really deep to get water and the water flow is not that great no matter how deep you go.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said have you made any progress on changes to the Town Charter to put the town budget out to vote. I have been hearing at previous meetings, you know, what is the town's feeling on this? And, there is a survey online now, maybe put a survey online for citizen's to answer that question as well, would citizen's like to have the town budget go to a referendum vote as the school budget does? I think a lot of people would like to see it. I would like to see this on the survey and see what the results would be? Time is going by. A decision needs to be done.

Councilor Crafts said anytime that we can have public input, I think, it's a good thing for the town.

Councilor Larochelle said one of the things I would like to see, Dot, is again I will comment on what my feelings about the survey as far as what we are looking for now is the process of what we would be getting into at this point in time and not be able to, regardless what the survey would come back with at this point in time, you know with what we would be able to change, I do agree it would be nice to have the input so we could move forward with it. I think at this point in time through the budget season the survey that is out there and some of the information we are having is really important at this point in time. I do agree it would be nice to put out the survey and get information, but I think probably we can do it towards the end of budget season or at the end of budget season so we have the information and can move forward for whatever voting we need to do this summer to make the changes or however that comes about. I think it is important, but if you don't see within the next few weeks or through budget season as far as on the survey is concerned, I mean I'm not sure exactly the timeframe you are looking for, but I think this is really important.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said whatever timeframe is necessary, I don't mean to interrupt, but time is going on and this subject was brought up months ago. You people are sitting on it and ignoring it.

Councilor Cote said we were talking about bringing it to a vote and we said well, we are not going to have a vote until November and now we are having one in April. Why not do it in April and give the people their chance, if they don't want it, they'll vote it down. If they do want it, then that is what we should be doing. I don't see why we keep avoiding this. April is a good time. We are voting on the school issues, let's put that out there and let the people vote. If the townspeople want it, so be it.

Mr. Eldridge said it's too late to do it for April. Councilor Bowie said the ballots are already printed. Councilor Cote said print another ballot and put it with it. Mrs. Lycette said you have to have it in by a certain deadline, 45 days prior to Election Day. Councilor Cote said so what would happen if we were to do a citizen's movement on it and get it in to the town, we've got 30 days. Mrs. Lycette said it still wouldn't fit that timeframe for April. Councilor Cote said, but you've got 30 days to answer it. Councilor Bowie said I don't remember it verbatim, but if you have a petition with the right number of signatures and it comes to the Council, the Council has to act on it in 10 days or 7 days or something like that, then it would follow the voting process. Mrs. Lycette said that would have its own separate process all the way through.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said do you mean the Council cannot do a Charter change without a petition from the townspeople. Mr. Eldridge said Charter changes have to be voted on by the public. Councilor Mason said they are quite specific, too. You can't just put something, you have to know what you are voting on, correct?

Mr. Eldridge said if it's going to come from the Council, the Council has to vote to do that and you have to go through a public hearing process. There is a timeframe that you have to follow and then if the Council approves it to go forward, you set a date within the timeframes outlined in the Charter to go to the public.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said the way the present Council is moving we'll be lucky to have it on a referendum vote and a Charter change in five to ten years.

Don Fellows said I had one question and now I have one question and one comment. The question is a simple one. I know that when Route 9 is happening, when is Upland Road projected, is it this year. Councilor Bowie said we heard that it's supposed to be the summer of 2010. Mr. Eldridge said it goes out to bid in May. Usually it's a 30 day bid process, once they award the bid.

Don Fellows said my comment was, we just had it brought up again about the voting by the town. I just wanted to give you my personal opinion for what it is worth. I personally think the town wide voting on the situation on the budget as a normal process is a bad idea. I think it could work under very stringent conditions. The conditions being that we at least get as many voters voting on that as we got in gubernatorial elections. If we did not get that then it doesn't represent the town. I think we have a form of government the entire town voted on, a Councilor form of government that makes Council decisions. There are provisions, as I understand it that within the Charter for any citizen's group to come up with a change to the Charter, however, they choose to change the Charter. It is apparent to me that the Council has made its decision. I have seen no motions, no voting on bringing anything up, so I think the Council has already spoken on how they feel about it and I applaud that. I, also, think that if we are going to have some sort of motion or voting by the town we have to be very careful not to do what has been done with the school budget by the State level. I realize that we as a town vote on the school budget, up or down, but we also follow a practice that other towns have and that is if we don't like it, it gets voted down, then we vote it down again, because it is too high or we vote it down, because it is too low and whatever small group gets out here to vote on it is the one that carries the day. I think it should never be that way, it should never have been that way. Perhaps it is a good idea to vote on the school budget at a town, but not in minority groups; we might as well have a town meeting where a hundred people show up to do that. Food for thought, just my thoughts.

Kathy Yergin said I just wanted to second that. I don't need to get up, but I agree.

Mary Ann Adams said I've been out of the loop for awhile. Do we still have budget meetings the public is welcome to attend? Mr. Eldridge said all the workshops are open to the public. They are announced just like any other meeting and then by Charter we have to have a formal public hearing where the school and town presents their budgets and gets questions and answers come from either the town or the school. It is still a very public forum if they choose to attend. Mrs. Adams said so the public can have input, they can come to the Council meetings and give their input there too. Mr. Eldridge said yes. Mrs. Adams said we elected you folks to represent our town and take good care of us; let's hope we can all be respectful. I certainly applaud Don who I don't know for what he said. I think you guys do a great job.

Chief Brooks said, recently, probably at least twice in the last three months, resolutions have come before the Council to approve drug forfeiture money. The last two that were brought before you, I am bringing this to your attention now and I am hoping that our local State representative's ears are really tuned into this; there is a disturbing trend that has begun. About two plus weeks ago, Mr. Eldridge is familiar with this, I brought it to his attention, and then I received a call from the Attorney General's office. The Attorney General's office has a special prosecutor for drug cases. We had a drug forfeiture, it was a small amount, but it's still \$684, a drug forfeiture on a drug case that the party pled guilty to and the court in its decision ruled that the drug forfeiture money would be allocated to go to the State to pay the fine. Well, déjà vu, today on my phone, I received a late afternoon call from the Attorney General's office on that last resolution that you just approved for \$1,000 on a drug forfeiture case and the court ordered again that the money not be forfeited over to the municipality that the State take the money allowing the guilty party to use it to pay for their fine. We have a disturbing trend that is beginning here. Granted we are not the large cities that get hundreds of thousands of dollars in drug forfeiture, but the drug forfeiture money we do get I have been putting toward purchasing capital equipment. To give you an example, sometime this month

we are supposed to be getting delivery of new bulletproof vests for the officers on the department. Our current vests are over seven years old. It has been a long time since we have gone through that. I was able to obtain two grants to help with the purchase of that, but those grants needed a local match. The local match was coming 100% out of our forfeiture account. The nice thing about that was that there was no local money being used for that. That is a significant expenditure. The problem now is if the State is going to start doing this to us they are taking money away from the local communities on work the local communities are performing. This is going to be problematic. I am going to email my other Chiefs in the district to see if anyone else is experiencing this, but this is now twice in three weeks that this has happened to us on drug cases. Again, to make you aware of what is going on out there.

Councilor Cote said do we have an update on what is going on with the Feeney case. I hear this about 200 times a month. What happened with that? Where does that money go? When are they going to look into that? Have they covered that? Are they sweeping that under the rug? Where is that going? Mr. Eldridge said it is in the AG's office and its just waiting to be prosecuted. It is there. It is in the system. It is not a high priority, I think, is a fair thing to say.

Chief Brooks said correct. I received an update from the Attorney General's office on that case, probably three weeks ago. They informed me very clearly that the case is still there. They are ready to begin prosecution of the case; however, it is not at the level on their priority list that we would like it to be. They have a lot of other issues going on across the State with limited staff, this is what I have been told, which I do know they have limited staff up there now. I updated Mr. Eldridge on it and that is all I was told. They are going to get to it, but they haven't given us a date.

Councilor Crafts said I will just comment on that. Their caseloads are backing up. They just don't have enough judges in the court and they are bombarded with smaller issues. It's a mess. I can see where it's not a priority.

Chief Brooks said there are multiple problems with that. I have to attend a meeting at the end of this month at District Court with the judge there, he has requested all the local police chiefs that work through Lewiston District Court, because, again, the State is so overburdened on a particular issue they are now going to put that burden onto local municipalities and the law enforcement agencies. It's an administrative function, but instead of the District Court system doing it they are going to require the local jurisdictions to do it, which goes back to a couple of years ago when they took subpoenas, the District Attorney's office always used to draft the subpoenas, but now in all juvenile cases subpoenas are drafted by the local jurisdiction, because they don't have the staff to do it. It is all funneling down and now, like I said, the forfeiture, they are taking their money away from us on that, too.

Councilor Crafts said from what I've seen is, the sad part is the municipalities, the schools, I mean, they are just passing it right down. I don't see it stopping until the economy really flips and revenues start to increase. It is just going to keep being passed down to us. It is not a pretty picture for the municipalities. I don't know how they expect the taxpayer at this level to just to keep things going, but that's just the boat we are in.

Michelle Swatsworth-Turmelle said you had given an \$85,000 savings on the water project. What you had given before was one bid for \$35 and a second one that came in at \$40 a foot. What does that \$85,000 represent as savings per foot. Councilor Bowie said maybe we didn't say it extremely well. When we put the bond together, we had gotten a bid from K & K that we wouldn't hold their feet to the fire on of \$35 per square foot. When we went back to them, their bid came in roughly at about \$40 per square foot, which was a bid of about \$485,000. When Ryan went to Longchamps and didn't tell them anything that we had from K & K, what would it cost me to have this work done. They came in slightly under \$35 a square foot, which was about \$402,000. So, they are slightly under the \$35 per square foot. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said that was the one part we didn't hear. I wanted to hear where the savings was per foot versus the lump sum, \$85,000.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said just an additional comment for those of you who haven't been in attendance on a regular basis for probably the last two years, last year when the budget was presented by department and overall, audience participation was allowed. Something new for those who hadn't attended for quite awhile to understand is that it is being presented in a workshop form and my understanding, based on the meeting before last when you guys voted on this, was that during the workshops there won't be any audience participation. That will only occur at the two public hearings, just so that those who weren't here before might fully understand that. I think there might have been some misunderstanding, but that is correct, as to how you decided this year to proceed, is workshops and only two public hearings.

Councilor Bowie said, right. Council has agreed that at workshops there will be no public input. The public can attend, but there will be no public input so that the Council and Advisory Board can get through their reviews and the School Committee and then we have a scheduled public hearing. I believe Council has said we should take public input from one of those workshops so there is public input two times throughout the process.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said, right, versus the one that it used to be, but this is very different from the prior years for those who have not been following closely in the past. I just wanted to make sure, because it was kind of alluded to that we still had public comment during the workshops and Town Council meetings when we really don't. I don't want people coming out expecting to be able to speak when it is a little different this year.

Councilor Bowie said I hope they still come out even though they can't speak so they can hear. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said well, no, I just don't want them to come out and think that they can speak. A lot of us are regulars here every single month, twice a month, which is leading into my other part. The fact that I come and participate and care enough to come and participate in the off-season not just during the budget, not just during something that pertains to my department or anything else, doesn't make me a special interest group or a member thereof. It makes me a concerned person who pays taxes in Lisbon and cares about the way things are going and the only way you can do that is to be informed. The only way you can be informed is to either attend the meetings or watch them on Thursday following the meeting of that same week. And every time it comes up, there is always this reference of special interest groups. I'm sorry, if I come to a meeting and I have a concern and I listen to what people within town speak just as all of you have spoken about different things that have come up. You have either you have gotten phone calls or talked to your constituents about, people within the town themselves talk and the fact that I am able to come here and be bold enough to speak about it I don't think makes me representative of a special interest group. I am of a group that cares about what is going on in town. And, if I care enough to want to come out and vote in June on my school budget and at the same time want to have input on my town budget, I don't think that makes me a special interest group; that gives me my ability to vote which is the last time I checked something within the United States we are allowed to have. So, I don't like the reference, a lot of times, to special interests. Since it was brought up I would just like a comment, because when I brought it up at the first meeting in December, I was told it would be put off until the next meeting, because you said there would be new people coming on board. I've raised it again several times. If it is going to be essentially your stance that you really don't want to address it, because that is kind of what was alluded to, but I want to give you the option to at least address that and give me an answer. Could we at least resolve that tonight, so it doesn't keep coming up and I don't have additional questions coming up. It will be there for the public to hear. I just want to know where your stance is, because it has been pushed off now for over two months. And at the first meeting, I was told and assured that it would be on the agenda soon before we got into budget season. We are now approaching that, so if you are not going to address it, just at least say so, because then we won't come and ask about it anymore. I would just respectfully ask for your opinion on it and let's be done and move forward.

Councilor Bowie said we will put it on the agenda and discuss it at the next meeting as a Council. Mr. Eldridge said March 16. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said it is being alluded to that you guys are getting comments from other people saying you are stonewalling, let's just put it out there and be done with it and at least have your final input and comments so that those types of things don't come up anymore.

Councilor Larochelle said I just want to comment and I think it is a legitimate concern. Here on the Council, I have concerns about how the process would go. The only thing I have to reference this by is pretty much what happened with the school vote last year. I think what happened with the school vote last year when it was voted down was a lot of people voting with not a lot of knowledge. I'm not picking on voters, it was just strictly a vote that was a shame vote, in a sense. It really didn't do anything for our public schools, it actually took away.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said the people spoke.

Councilor Larochelle said now don't get me wrong. I think, actually at the end of the day, if people realized or when they walked in to vote they had 100% of the information on what was going to happen with their vote, I mean, I guess my concern is having the people who vote be 100% knowledgeable on what they are voting for. I think, again, it is tough, it is just one of those things where, again, just going back to the school vote last year, pretty much what happened with the school concerns me a little bit, because money was taken away from something that really shouldn't have been taken away. It actually was really was kind of a bad, it wasn't something that benefited our town. When the townspeople vote to take away money where they don't know the money is coming from, because that is not what the vote says, it is just yes or no, then the money has to be taken away from keeping our buildings up where they need to be and not really affecting anything else; that is a concern to me. If people were actually able to vote and knew what the outcome of the vote would be, I would feel that to be a better vote, but I don't think the system for the school is really good the way they go through the voting process. I don't think it really benefits a lot, I think if anything it really puts a lot of burden onto the School Department, School Board, and the Town that has spent hours and hours to make a budget when people actually go in an vote and probably don't know the total outcome of what their vote will be when they vote on it. I am a little bit concerned that that may happen on the town side, too. Again, I just think there are a lot of flaws in the way the school vote gets put through and I would hate to see those flaws get put to the municipal side, too. That is my concern. Can it actually be ironed out to be a better process, possibly? I think that is one of the things we talked about is, it would just be nice to know exactly how it can be done to make it beneficial. To just say, yes, we need to have it happen like the school did last year, to me is concerning.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said I would find it hard to believe that none of you would agree that there is a lot of people that go to the polls no matter what it is they are voting on and they don't know what it is they are voting on. That would be my first comment. I would find it hard for anybody to refute that and say that everybody is educated. Councilor Larochelle said I totally agree.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said the second part I would remind you guys of is that what the vote came back and said was, that yes, it was too high, but remind you who made that dollar amount and then voted to cut it. There was no dollar amount attached to it, just that it was too high. You guys set the dollar amount that was then cut and voted on that amount, not the town; all that you got back was a message saying, yes, it was too high. What then proceeded beyond that was suggestions as to what you guys thought it was that was too high and that was the salary piece of it because it had not yet been decided. The union and all the negotiations had not yet come to fruition on the salary increase and that is where you guys derived the dollar amount from, based on that assumption that that was what the town was trying to send you as a message, so that was something you guys took on. I wasn't here for that meeting, as I was for all the other ones. It was a hard thing to try to derive what the message truly was. That is how you guys went with it; the

assumption was that the message is that the salary line needs to be cut, because the town employees did not get an increase and you guys thought that that was what the town was trying to send back. So, that is kind of where that amount came from. The dollar amount that was cut was what you guys decided upon was the dollar amount and voted on, not the town.

Councilor Larochelle said which is really tough. Councilor Bowie said okay, I am going to police ourselves. We have talked more than our ten minutes on this item. It is going on the March 16 agenda for further discussion.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said on the water line, you keep saying square foot. Is that square foot or linear foot? Councilor Bowie said linear foot, I'm sorry, Dot, linear foot.

APPOINTMENTS - NONE

COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Mason said I would just like to say that as a Councilor, I like to get phone calls from people and I haven't gotten any for a really long time. Specifically, I haven't gotten any on the budget question. If there is somebody out there in television land who wants to call me and tell me that we need to vote on the budget, I want to hear from you, because that helps me to know that there are all these people out there that other people say there are that want us to vote on the budget issue.

Councilor Crafts said I can say that I have been supportive of the idea, but I haven't gotten any calls from the public either. I think it is important that we do get input from the public. I welcome all calls.

Councilor Cote said the only thing that I would add to that is, what's there to be scared of. If we don't think that the people want it, put it out there, and let them vote on it.

Councilor Lunt said I want to say thank you to all the CMP line workers who spent the whole weekend working out there in that nasty weather. I lost power and a lot of other people did. Thanks for spending your weekend working on that when I'm sure you would rather be doing something else. Good job.

Councilor Bowie said I would also like to thank the tree service people who actually before all these storms came out and cleared a lot of our area in town. All the work they did kept the power on for a lot of people. If it weren't for the work that they had done throughout the summer we would have been in a whole lot worse situation. Councilor Cote said it certainly wasn't because of too many trees on Route 9.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

VOTE (2010-40) Councilor Mason, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to go into executive session at 8:47 PM per 1 MRSA Section 405 (6) (D) Labor Negotiations for the General Unit, Public Works, Sergeants, & Maine Association of Police. **Order passed - Vote 6-0.**

The Council dismissed the Council Secretary. The Council came out of executive session at 9:41 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

VOTE (2010-41) Councilor Cote, seconded by Councilor Lunt moved to adjourn at 9:41 PM.
Order passed - Vote 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

These Council meeting minutes were transcribed by Beth French and Twila Lycette.