

Minutes of Meeting  
CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN

March 4, 2009

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 4:05 p.m. in the Meeting Room of Conway Town Hall with the following present: Selectmen, Larry Martin, (Chair), C. David Weathers, Mark Hounsell, Howard C. Dickinson and Bob Drinkhall; Town Manager, Earl W. Sires; and Recording Secretary, Karen Hallowell

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Martin led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

The Board reviewed and signed various documents contained in the signature folder.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

The Board reviewed and signed the manifest dated March 5, 2009.

CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATION ON WARRANT ARTICLES

Article 8 Bond Article – **Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall to recommend the Bond. The motion carried 5-0-0.**

Article 9 Budget – There was a review of the operating budget amount of \$9,199,343. **Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to recommend Article 9 for \$9,199,343.** Mr. Sires reviewed the budget that was submitted by the Budget Committee at Town Meeting would have been a flat tax rate and this will now add a few cents. Mr. Hounsell stated having given this some thought and people will be burdened with taxes he will not vote in support to recommend this budget to the voters. There was no further discussion and Chairman Martin moved the question. **The motion failed 2-3-0 Messrs. Weathers and Martin voting in the affirmative and Messrs. Drinkhall, Dickinson and Hounsell voting in the negative.** It was pointed out this would appear as a non recommendation on the warrant. Mr. Dickinson stated this may make people vote for the default budget. **Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, for reconsideration.** There was discussion as to whether or not there would be enough information available that the Board is doing this because they disapprove of the \$40,000 being added back into the budget. Mr. Weathers questioned if the budget article fails, does the town get the default budget and Mr. Sires replied in the affirmative and reviewed the default budget is higher than the proposed budget. There was further discussion on how the Board felt they should vote on this article. Mr. Dickinson questioned if the Chair would accept an abstention on the vote. Mr. Martin advised each member can vote how they want to. The Board next discussed how the ballot would read if there were abstentions – recommended or not recommended. Mr. Sires reviewed that the municipal attorney opined abstentions went with the pro votes

but if all abstain will need to get another opinion. Mr. Weathers suggested that the newspaper clarify this and that the Board of Selectmen were behind the entire budget except for this one particular item. Mr. Martin pointed out this still puts the voters in an unsure position. The choice for the budget is either with the \$40,000 or the default budget. Mr. Hounsell stated that where the \$40,000 goes is up to the Board of Selectmen. There was further brief discussion. The Board voted on the motion to reconsider and the **motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Weathers voting in the negative.** The Board next considered the original motion (**to recommend Article 9 for \$9,199,343**). Chairman Martin moved the question and the **motion carried 2-0-3 with Messrs. Weathers and Martin voting in the affirmative and Messrs. Drinkhall, Dickinson and Hounsell abstaining.** Mr. Hounsell stated he wanted it made clear his abstention is not because he is not in favor of this budget but because he does not support the \$40,000 added to the budget.

Article 18 Children Unlimited – **Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to recommend Article 18 for \$12,000. The motion carried 5-0-0.**

#### MEDIA /PUBLIC COMMENTS

Andrea Osmun of the Conway Daily Sun questioned if with the abstentions this meant Article 9 will be recommended on the ballot. Mr. Sires replied in the affirmative but also advised he would like to confirm this information.

#### ADJOURN

At 4:30 p.m. the meeting was adjourned at the call of the Chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen J. Hallowell  
Executive Secretary