

**HUDSON BOARD OF SELECTMEN****Minutes of the November 17, 1998 Meeting**

**1. Called to Order** by Chairman E. Lorraine Madison at 4:04 p.m.

**2. Attendance**

Selectmen E. Lorraine Madison, Rhona Charbonneau (arrived 4:10 p.m.), Shawn N. Jasper, Terry Stewart, Ann Seabury (arrived 5:10 p.m.); Paul D. Sharon, Town Administrator; Priscilla Boisvert, Executive Assistant; Steve Malizia, Finance Director; Gary Wulf, Labor Relations Consultant; Kevin Burns, Road Agent; Fire Chief Frank Carpentino and Executive Secretary Torrey Demanche; Fidele Bernasconi

**3. Nonpublic Sessions**

*Motion by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Stewart, to enter Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted carried 5-0 by roll call vote.*

Nonpublic Session was entered into at 4:05 and was terminated at 4:35 p.m.

*Motion by Selectman Charbonneau, seconded by Selectman Stewart to seal the Minutes carried unanimously.*

**4. Budget Reviews****Community Grants -- HEDCorp**

Chairman Madison said HEDCorp was asking for a \$26,000 increase over last year's appropriation of \$10,000. Fidele said if this person was located at Town Hall, it would save money. Chairman Madison said there was already a space problem. Paul said they could use Attorney Ratigan's old office or the small conference room. Selectman Charbonneau said they could pick up a fax machine for \$300. Fidele said there is money available for that. Selectman Jasper said the Attorney's old office space was under-utilized. The Treasurer, Trustees of the Trust Funds, Supervisors of the Checklist and the Sewer Utility Clerk presently utilize the area. Paul said, in conjunction with expanding the Town Clerk's area, the present mail room will be moved into the area where the Sewer Utility Clerk is located. They've confined Coleman to the former Police evidence storage area. He suggested the possibility of the small office in the hallway, across from the former Assessor's office. It's presently used for storage. Selectman Jasper didn't think that would be an appropriate area. He thought the legal office would be better, especially if the Board is committee to doing something like this. Selectman Charbonneau said it's important to get the right person on this position, someone like Fidele, who worked night and day on it. Chairman Madison pointed out that Fidele was a volunteer and asked if the new person would be a volunteer, too. She was told no. She asked if they should do a warrant article. Selectman Jasper said no, because this was a grant. Chairman Madison said if it was a grant, they shouldn't be giving them space at Town Hall. Paul said it's an employee. Selectman Jasper said the Town is just providing space for HEDCorp. It's not any different than letting the Seniors have space. Fidele said there is office space next to his available at \$250 a month, including heat and electricity. Selectman Charbonneau said it would have to be handicapped accessible. Selectman Stewart pointed out that the Town Planner and Engineer would be accessible if the office was at Town Hall. Selectman Jasper agreed, saying it made sense for HEDCorp to be physically located at Town Hall because they can work with the people they are trying to help. Chairman Madison asked about anyone else the Town helps that might want space at Town Hall. Selectman Charbonneau said this was 'ours.' Selectman Jasper said it's economic development, designed to increase the tax base. If someone else

comes in who wants to increase the tax base, they will provide them with space, too. Fidele said they've already increased the 1998 tax base about \$175,000. He said they could remove the furniture expense because he can probably get some from Sanders, like he did for the Fire Department. Chairman Madison said they can also take out the electricity, heat and air conditioning. Paul asked who was going to sign the payroll. Selectman Jasper said HEDCorp. Paul asked who would do the payroll. Selectman Jasper said that's HEDCorp's call. Fidele said they'd probably get another grant from Sam's next year. Chairman Madison said if the grant is approved, everything will be handled by HEDCorp; the person hired would not be a Town Employee. Fidele said he understood and would pass that message along to whomever was the President. Chairman Madison said if the next Board votes not to approve this next year, there would be no funding available for an employee. Fidele said he understood.

Selectman Charbonneau said Fidele has done a very good job, but they don't know if someone else will. She thinks the person should be hired on a trial basis. Chairman Madison said HEDCorp is handling this and doesn't have to answer to the Board of Selectmen. If the \$28,000 is approved, the Selectmen have no control over the money. HEDCorp could throw a big party. Fidele said that isn't true of the current board. The Chairman asked Fidele if he was going to apply for the position. Fidele said absolutely not.

*Motion by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Stewart, to grant HEDCorp \$28,000 carried unanimously..*

### **Assessing**

Chairman Madison said after the Board reviewed the Assessor's budget on Friday, there was some concern about the Warrant Article for the additional employee and some thought that they could go to outside hire instead. She asked Jim if could accomplish the same thing with outside hire, if they take away the additional employee he has asked for. Jim said an outside hire is independent of doing the update in 2000. The additional person is to meet the existing need. Without one, it would push the equalization update to 2001. He would end up shipping more things out to the consultant and it is difficult to oversee someone who is not in the office. There is also a lot of confidential material his office deals with, and he questioned the wisdom of trusting that information to an outside hire. A consultant would also be working for other towns and might not always be available to work in Hudson when needed. For reasons of monitoring ability, control and confidentiality concerns, he preferred hiring a Town employee. Selectman Jasper said the number of employees in other departments have increased, but the Assessing Department has stayed the same for years. Twenty years ago the Town was much smaller than it is today. He said Selectman Seabury compares this to Scarborough, Maine, but they don't know the quality of work that is done up there, adding that you cannot assess a property if you don't go out and look at it. Although he's not crazy about adding additional personnel, he thinks the Board should uphold the decision they made last Friday because it ends up being a money-maker.

Selectman Charbonneau was concerned with the salary because, when the benefits were factored in, it came to \$41,000 and suggested using temporary hire. Another suggestion was a six-month probationary period. Sometimes when you hire someone, even with good qualifications, they don't do what they were hired to do. She felt that if someone is not doing their job, you should get rid of them before the probationary period is up. Chairman Madison said they have union contracts that they have to abide by. Paul said there is a six-month probationary period. Jim said there are no temp agencies for professional appraisers.

Chairman Madison asked if there was anything more. There was no response, so she said the Board has been convinced they should leave things as they are. Jim thanked the Board.

### **Warrant Article for Non-Union Salary Increases**

"Shall the Town of Hudson raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,000.00 for wages and benefits increases for non-union personnel?"

Chairman Madison said last year, the increases did not consider Public Works or the Rec Director. Also, one position should be given a substantial increase this year--and they all knew who that is.

Motion by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Stewart, to send to the Warrant carried unanimously.

### **Fire Department**

Selectman Charbonneau said she talked with Frank today about his budget. In a previous meeting, the Board approved the Warrant Article asking for two firefighters, but not the article asking for a training officer. She asked Frank if he'd prefer one firefighter and a training officer, saying she thinks the Fire Department needs a training officer. Chief Carpentino said *all* of the positions are needed, but the two firefighters will help in responding to calls, which will reduce the cost of the overtime. Capt. Carter, the part-time training officer, is unable to do his job adequately because of having to deal with the calls. Selectman Charbonneau said she had asked the Chief if the firefighters could be worked in on days. Chief Carpentino said the union contract clearly stipulates firefighters will work two 10-hour days, followed by two 14-hour nights followed by four days off. Unless there is a sidebar agreement, he can't adjust the hours.

Chairman Madison asked if Selectman Charbonneau was making a motion to change something. Selectman Charbonneau said no. Chairman Madison asked the Chief if the warrant article for two firefighters was still the first priority. Chief Carpentino said yes. The two firefighters can also be used to cover Dispatch. He also needs a Training Officer, more Dispatchers, fire alarm people, secretaries, etc. But the firefighters would be utilized because they're more versatile. They answer to calls in Hudson and Mutual Aid, as well.

Selectman Jasper said he was a little surprised at the Chief's priority because last year they talked about a training officer and he thought it'd be a little higher priority this year.

(Start Tape 1, Second Side)

Things are very quiet at night and maybe they ought to get two people on at 40 hours a week, getting coverage where needed at half the price. Nothing will happen with the Call Department, which is in flux, until they have a Training Officer. He wasn't blaming the Chief or the Deputy, but there is no recruitment or centralization in the Call Department. Night before last, Ladder 2 went to Nashua and then there was an accident, which left them with no full-time personnel in Town and only three full-time firefighters came back and two of those were under a year. About a dozen Call firefighters did come back, which is about 50% of the active force. They will never be able to staff for the ultimate calls, but they need to be putting more resources into building up the Call Department. As the Chief told him when he came on board, he was looking for 45 active Call firefighters. They need a program and a plan to build it up. When there is a major incident, the people coming back is the Call force, not the full-time people.

Chairman Madison understood what Selectman Jasper was saying, but she did think there was a plan in place. Even before MRI came up with their list of recommendations, the Fire Department said they needed eight firefighters. The Board told the Fire Department they would approve two a year because they wouldn't be approved all at once. They asked the Chief what his needs are and he said he wants to go with the two firefighters; and *he* is the Fire Chief. She asked if Selectman Jasper was saying in addition to. Selectman Jasper said he was saying in addition to the Training Officer. In the first year, you get more bang for your buck if you say to the union, "We need to get these people on during the day." They pay \$175,000 every time you add a person to a shift. Chairman Madison said the plan is to add two firefighters a year and she doesn't believe the Chief hasn't look at all of those things.

Chief Carpentino agreed with what Selectman Jasper was saying, with the exception of the call to Nashua because he didn't know who came back. One member of the Call force resigned yesterday because he purchased a home in Weare. Unless they change the wording of the contract, there is nothing that can be done with that. If the Board wishes to go in that direction, they should direct Gary (Wulf) to do that. The

Training Officer and adding to Dispatch are all necessary, but the firefighters will be more versatile, who can be used from EMS to fire, to rescue, to dispatch, to assist in training.

**5. Step II Grievance Hearing--IAFF**

**6. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 5:15 p.m. by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Stewart, carried unanimously.

Session with Labor Relations Consultant, pursuant to RSA 91-A:2 I, Collective Bargaining

Recorded and Transcribed by Priscilla Boisvert

Executive Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

**HUDSON BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

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**E. Lorraine Madison, Chairman**

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**Rhona Charbonneau**

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**Shawn N. Jasper**

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**Ann Seabury**

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**Terry Stewart**