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Stetson reported that the pending sale of the Town-owned property on Chase Hill Road has hit another snag. The buyer's mortgage company has discovered a procedural omission in the Town's lien process back in the 1980s. Stetson will pursue a cure.

The Board then met with Road Agent John Thompson. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the ongoing drainage problem on Pinewood Lane. The Board understood from his representations at a previous meeting that Jon Champagne was to install a catch basin and dry well at the terminus of the road. However Thompson reported to the Board that Champagne had called him a couple of days prior to his scheduled start and told him that the project was not going to happen.

Stetson told the Board that a local Realtor has called the Town Office to report that he is trying to assist in mediating the issue between the prior owner, who he had represented in the sale of the property, and the current owner, who feels the prior owner should bear the responsibility for mitigating the problem. The Board decided to have the Town install the structures and pursue recovering the cost from the current landowner and let him deal with the former owner and the Realtor. Stetson will seek procedural advice from the Town's attorney.

Thompson told the Board that recent heavy rains have again created some erosion problems and that his crews are addressing each one.

Stetson relayed a request from a property owner on Second Street for permission to locate a drilled well in an area very near the edge of the assumed Town right of way on that road. Stetson provided a photo of the area showing the proposed well location and the road. Because there is a utility pole located between the two, and acting on Thompson's recommendation, the Board approved the request conditioned upon the owners executing a hold harmless agreement with the Town.

Stetson reported that there is still no word from the New Hampshire Office of Emergency Management regarding whether or not Merrimack County

qualified for financial assistance from FEMA for the April flooding rains.

The Board then met with Police Chief Glenn Laramie who reported that the department responded to 144 calls for service during the previous 30-day period. He told the Board that there is no word yet from the dealership regarding the delivery of the new cruiser.

He showed the Board the new style hat that the members of the department will now wear and cited the bargain that the department got on the first six hats. He also told the Board that the officers' schedules are set for the Fourth of July. He reported that Officer Hewitt has now completed more specialized training to detect the level of a person's intoxication.

The Board denied abatement applications received from New Hampshire Electric Cooperative and New England Power Company. The Board granted an abatement for a property on Currier Road as a result of reducing the assessment of that property by \$300 and another for a property on Franklin Highway for which assessment was reduced by \$9,400. The Board ratified approval of an existing application for elderly property tax exemption.

The Board then met with Fritz Giddings from Wilmot who asked the selectmen about Wilmot, Andover, and a third town hiring an assessor who would be responsible for assessing and revaluations. Fenton explained that Stetson now performs the assessing duties and an outside firm is hired to do revaluations. The only need that he perceived would be someone on a part-time basis to assist Stetson in measuring and listing properties.

The Board then met with State Rep-

resentative Jim Danforth who asked the Board if the Town would issue him a permit for signs to be installed at the skateboard park and school playground displaying the information that the State makes public regarding registered sex offenders that reside in Andover. The Board agreed to issue such a permit conditioned upon conformance to the Town's sign ordinance and written approval from the School Board as the signs are proposed to be on school property.

The Board reviewed correspondence from Comcast requesting that the Town consent to the upcoming transfer of the Adelphia cable franchise to Comcast. Godwin opined that there is little a town the size of Andover could do to block the sale and suggested that the selectmen sign the consent.

The Board acknowledged receipt of a request from Richard Janson to lower the water level of Highland Lake from mid-September to mid-October to enable work on the shoreline abutting his property. He has now secured all necessary State and federal permits to do the work. The Board conditioned its likely approval on Janson providing a contractor's advice about how far down the lake must be drawn.

The Board awarded this year's Tax Anticipation Note to Pemigewasset Bank with an interest rate of 2.71%.

Stetson relayed two more complaints alleging violation of the State's junk vehicle statute on a property on Plains Road. The Board asked Stetson to investigate and indicated a willingness to initiate enforcement action if necessary.

The Board changed its next meeting from July 4 to July 5 at 7 PM. The selectmen will cancel the meeting if there is no significant business to conduct.

Planning Board

June 14

Present: Don Gould, Chair; Eric Johnson, Vice-Chair; Joe Stearns; Paul Currier; Keith Pfeifer; Wood Sutton, alternate, appointed to vacant position.

Determination of Completion: Site Plan Review for Jon Champagne, Route 4 at Plains Road for a Landscaping Service. Champagne presented a State-approved septic design, a driveway permit, and a revised plan. The Board unanimously deemed the application complete pending receipt of application.

Public Hearing: Site Plan Review for Jon Champagne. The Board unanimously approved the site plan review with the condition that there shall be no retail sales of materials, however, incidental customer visits for material pickup will be allowed, along with the seasonal sale of Christmas trees as approved by the Andover Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Public Hearing: Minor Subdivision (2 lots) for Susan and Tim Norris at 313 Emery Road. David Krause, presented the minor subdivision plan. The request is to divide out 2.96 acres of the parent lot of 19 acres on Emery Road. A preliminary septic design and perimeter survey for the whole lot indicating the topographic was presented. The Board unanimously voted to accept the minor subdivision as presented.

Determination of Completion: Foodstop, Brian Molloy for service bays and seasonal sale structure. Jean Molloy, representing Foodstop, presented a completed application and a letter of intent for the proposed use. The Board requested clarifications, then unani-

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Family Of 12 Escapes House Fire On North Short St.

By Elizabeth Walters
Concord Monitor staff

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A fire in Andover Sunday evening [June 26] put a family of 12 out of their home for at least several months and sent three firefighters to the hospital with heat exhaustion.

Seven of the 10 children in the O'Mara family, of 37 North Short Road, were watching TV in the living room after an afternoon at Highland Lake when they noticed something was wrong.

"It actually started smoking in the living room," Katie O'Mara, who is 13, said. "And then we heard something - it sounded like a board had dropped. And then I looked upstairs and saw flames coming from my brothers' room."

Theresa O'Mara, their mother, heard the noise from the porch, where she was talking on the phone. "All the kids started screaming, and they all ran out," she said. She quickly realized that one of the kids was missing - Blaise, who's 4. She ran inside, found him asleep on the couch and pulled him to safety.

Later, firemen would tell the family the booming sound was probably the windows in the back of the second floor blowing out.

John Landry, Andover's fire chief, said the department got the first call around 6:15 PM. The fire wasn't severe, but he called out three alarms because he knew that Sunday's extreme heat would tax firefighters quickly. Air temperatures reached into the mid-90s outside, and while firefighters' protective suits are good at keeping heat out, they are also heavy and trap the firefighter's own body heat.

"A normal fireman's time in a building is about half an hour, maybe 20 minutes," he said. "If it gets over 85, 90 degrees, you can cut that in half."

Normally, Landry said, paramedics at a fire scene give firefighters water, check their blood pressure and pulse and clear them to go back to the fire. But Sunday, most weren't approved for a second turn. Landry said that the Andover and East Andover departments alone went through about 10 cases of water bottles. Two Andover firefighters were sent to Franklin Hospital to be treated for heat exhaustion, and one was taken to New London Hospital.

He said he was grateful for the help from the other departments that responded, including Tilton-Northfield, Sutton, New London, Wilmot, Danbury, Bristol, Salisbury, Boscawen, and Franklin. In all, about 50 firefighters battled the blaze.

What made O'Mara shudder wasn't what happened, but what could have if the fire had broken out at night, when the kids were upstairs sleeping. "We would have lost them all, how fast that thing went up," she said.

The children are staying with friends, O'Mara said, and she's hoping to rent a place soon for her and the youngest eight. She worries about affording the rental while still paying the mortgage on the house.

The oldest boy and girl, 17-year-old Patrick and 19-year-old Crystal, live in an apartment above the house's detached garage with O'Mara's husband, William, from whom she is separated. They'll also need somewhere to stay; firefighters had to turn off the electricity to the property. It is expected to take six months to a year for the main house to be habitable again.

Theresa O'Mara said community members have been generous, dropping by with pizza and soda for the family, and Tracey Patterson, a family friend, has set up a fund at Lake Sunapee Bank.

Donations to the fund for the O'Maras can be made at any Lake Sunapee Bank branch or can be mailed c/o The O'Maras Fire Fund to Lake Sunapee Bank, P.O. Box 274, Andover 03216.

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