

## **Selectmen from page 11**

Fourth of July event was not sponsored by an official Town of Andover committee, the Town liability insurance did not cover the event. Consequently any liability claim and award due to an injury or property damage related to the event would have been a financial burden for the entire community and be paid for through our taxes, not by our liability insurance. That was the sole reason for encouraging the Fourth of July Committee to become an official Town committee.

The only other responsible option was for the Fourth of July Committee to obtain its own liability policy, and that was found to be prohibitively expensive by the Committee. The Selectmen reiterated that they have no interest in being involved in committee work but needed to provide coverage for the long-standing Fourth of July celebration.

Selectman Danforth stated that people from various committees had come to the Board for arbitration of committee decisions. The Recreation Committee was reorganized and is operating well. The Fourth of July Committee voted last year to become a Town committee. During the summer, a second vote was taken, and the Committee did not want to be a Town committee. Later, another vote was taken and the Committee voted to become a Town committee.

"\$39.95 for the blue trash bags used for town-wide cleanup was charged to the Conservation Commission without consultation." Town Administrator Roy stated that she understood the event was being sponsored by the Conservation Commission.

Selectman Danforth reminded everyone that a 1976 Town Meeting decision required a purchasing policy. There are state laws that apply to each committee, and the policy will be updated this year.

"Hiring a forester is not a good idea." "Eradication of Japanese Knotweed is expensive and ineffective. The UNH Extension Service has an effective plan."

"The Cable TV Committee was surprised that the Board had dissolved the committee." Selectman Danforth reported that he had spoken with Charlie Darling about this last summer. He and Charlie went over the details, and Charlie said he agreed that dissolving the committee would be best for everyone.

### **Friends of the Northern Rail Trail**

Ed Hiller represented the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail and reported that the Department of Transportation is planning to change the "Hogback" Bridge on Route 11 between Dyers Crossing and the Franklin town line. There are two options available for the structure above the Northern Rail Trail.

One option is the tunnel-like culvert like the Lawrence Street installation. The second option is a precast cement

structure such as that over the Northern Rail Trail in Potter Place. The precast cement structure is definitely preferable to the long metal culvert that is long, dark, and secluded.

Ed, on behalf of the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail, asked the Board to send a letter to the Department of Transportation recommending that the replacement for the Route 11 bridge over the Northern Rail Trail be the concrete arch type used to replace the Route 11 bridge in Potter Place. The Board agreed to do so.

Selectman Danforth asked Ed if the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail would have a presentation ready for the construction meeting that will be held at the Town Office; no date has yet been set. Ed agreed to prepare a presentation and to talk with the Historical Society, Recreation Committee, and the Conservation Committee about their input for the meeting.

### **Police Department**

Chief Laramie presented the stats for February 15 to March 15. There were two burglaries at residences on back roads. Patrols have been increased, as have property checks. Also, there were four auto accidents that were weather-related. Chief Laramie gave other stats for the month.

Chief Laramie reported that the Town has a form that is given to truckers that requires them to give bond. The forms must be in the truck if the driver is stopped by the police.

Three years ago, Andover was awarded an Off Highway Recreational Vehicle patrol grant by the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. The grant has been denied for the last two years, but Chief Laramie has applied again. The grant provides funding for patrol time on the Northern Rail Trail.

Sgt. Mahoney and Chief Laramie have been attending meetings at AE/MS focused on school violence. Emergency services, the fire chief, the Town Administrator, school representatives, and Proctor Academy representatives also attend and the meetings, which are facilitated by Jane Hubbard of Hubbard Consulting.

Chief Laramie asked what the next step is in the purchase of the new cruiser. The Board agreed that the Chief

will get an official quote from Irwin and pass it on to Town Administrator Roy who will work with Lake Sunapee Bank to obtain the \$25,000 financing as voted (Article 12 on the 2014 Warrant) at Town Meeting.

Selectman Danforth asked if the Town has an animal control program with a scanner to read the digital chips in dogs and if there was a system where people can drop off information and photos of their dogs. The Chief replied there is no such program. He also stated that the position of Animal Control Officer does not fall under the Police Department. That position has not been staffed in many years, as no one has been willing to serve in that capacity.

### **Town Clerk and Tax Collector**

Town Clerk and Tax Collector Joanna Sumner met with the Board and reported that she would like to call taxpayers whose properties are up for tax deeding to discuss arranging payment plans.

Joanna reported that there are \$51,000 uncollected taxes from 2011. She also reported that 96% of the billed amount has been collected for the 2013 tax billing.

Selectman Danforth stated that statutorily, the Board has three options:

In the event of tragedy, catastrophic illness, etc. the Board can arrange an option whereby the taxpayer is able to re-establish themselves with the Town.

Taxpayers who are over age 65 and are unable to move from the position of three years in arrears to current status can meet with the Board to discuss options.

In any case, the Board will look at the overall situation. The Board would like to find a way to use some discretion (per RSA) to help seriously delinquent taxpayers.

Selectman Coolidge asked Joanna what would be the consequences of a missed payment on a pay arrangement. The Board gave Joanna permission to proceed and stated that consequences of missed payments should be part of a written policy. This will help future Boards and tax collectors as well as give clear definition to any payment arrangement.

Joanna said it is necessary to find a See Selectmen on page 13



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