

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MARCH 29, 2016  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Board members present: George Willard, Ken Caisse, Gail Cromwell

Call to order by Willard at 6:30 p.m.

Willard stated that he would be recording the meeting on his personal recorder.

Demolition of 400 NH RT 45: Willard stated that the first thing on the agenda was an update on the demolition of 400 NH RT 45. Willard asked if Tim Fiske, Road Agent, was in attendance. Fiske was not in attendance. Willard moved to the second item on the agenda: resignation of the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, and Treasurer.

Resignations: Willard informed the public that this meeting is to discuss the resignations of Wendy Drouin, Town Clerk, and Shannon Kelley, Treasurer. Willard stated that he had received emails on Thursday, March 24, 2016, a little after 3:30 pm from Drouin and Kelley, a little after 4 pm informing the Board of their intentions to resign. Willard, with Drouin's permission, read her letter of resignation, effective April 7, 2016 and then said that Drouin has been Town Clerk for 7 ½ years, was just re-elected for another 3 year term and he is disappointed in the resignation. Cromwell stated that she is also disappointed that Drouin is leaving.

Drouin suggested that Kelley's letter be read as both are elected officials and some of the common concerns are the same. Willard, with Kelley's permission, read her letter of resignation, effective April 7, 2016 stated that Kelley has been Treasurer for 7+ years, was just re-elected for another 3 year term and that he is disappointed in this resignation as well. Kelley stated that, although there is no formal letter in place her Deputy Treasurer will also be leaving. Jennifer Connolly feels that she is Kelley's Deputy and when Kelley is gone so is Connolly. Connolly has offered to stay in place to do the basics of the job for a short time. Caisse stated that he knows there have been issues brewing for a while and asked both Drouin and Kelley to share why this has happened so that the Board can work to get things straightened out. Jeanne Whitcomb requested that a third resignation letter from her as Deputy Town Clerk be read before Drouin and Kelley answered Caisse. Willard read the letter of resignation for the Deputy Town Clerk, which is effective April 28, 2016.

Drouin stated that as Caisse said this has been brewing for a while and it is not about the \$1.00 fee. Drouin has felt that the office has been a "fine-tuned machine", the ladies of the office work well together, but everyone has felt that the office has been under assault for a while. Interactions with some of the Selectmen have been of a more negative nature then they should be. They do not feel supported and it has not been a good working environment. Have had a lot of issues, we have had town's people present when accused of things, not a good working environment anymore, the residents have been great and Drouin said she appreciates the support she has gotten from the residents over the years. Kelley stated that she wanted to reinforce Drouin's comments. Kelley feels that everyone in the office is professional, good at their job and go above and beyond for whatever is needed, but conditions at the office have become dire and extremely unpleasant and nobody should have to work under those conditions, it's not fair to anyone of the office staff. Whitcomb said that in the 22 years or so that she has worked for the town it has never been like this.

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MARCH 29, 2016  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Whitcomb commented on the current negativity to the office staff and stated that the resignations would not be happening if they didn't feel they had to.

Willard asked if there was anyone in the audience that would like to speak. Olivia Holmes stated that this is distressing to her to see four people who mean so much to so many, and whom the town voted into office, to feel so distressed by their work environment and the town needs to pay attention and she would like to know what can be done to relieve the tension and take the stress away. Holmes stated that due to recent back surgery her doctors had been asking her to rate the pain on a scale of one to ten. Holmes asked Drouin and Kelley, on a scale of one to ten, how bad do they think the situation has become, Drouin, Kelley, and Whitcomb all stated nine.

John Kieley stated that he has had some involvement in the management of the town for a long time. Kieley stated that he has a healthy respect for those who have resigned. Kieley then stated that being a Selectman you have to look at the total office and how the total town is being managed. Kieley said he is not privy to any performance evaluations that have gone on with non-elected officials, but he does believe and does support, the work by this Select Board, the unanimous work by this Board to make our town run more efficiently and more correctly. Mentioned the town report which listed him as a current Selectmen, which was embarrassing and looked at the budget description in the town report and stated that was embarrassing. Stated he is on the Budget Committee and doesn't understand how anyone can understand the town budget by reading the town report, and he understands that one Selectmen was upset by this mismanagement, further stating that it can't be thrown under the rug, it needs to be addressed. Kieley stated that he understood the Select Board unanimously took action to "clean things up". If don't "clean things up" and just let "things happen" run into serious consequences. Kieley then spoke about a vote by the town for the Converse Road Bridge #1 and how that was "discombobulated" and he stood up at Town Meeting, apologized for it and informed the town that we had to start over saying that is an example of the Select Board taking responsibility for their actions. Kieley said he is sorry if people in the office don't want the Select Board to take responsibility for our town, but if you don't do that you end up in very, very bad positions. If personalities involved, okay, everybody wants what is right for the town and he thinks this Select Board has acted very well for the town and if some people want to resign because they don't like the decisions of the Select Board he's sorry, so be it. This is not about people using their office to pressure the Select Board to do things that are not in the best interest of the Town of Temple.

Martin Connolly asked Kelley what she had said about his daughter-in-law, Jen Connolly, resigning. M. Connolly stated that he had gone out to call his daughter-in-law and then asked his other daughter-in-law to confirm the information. Kelley read from a text she had received from Jen Connolly. M. Connolly asked Jill Connolly to repeat phone conversation with Jen Connolly. Jill Connolly stated "She said that she would continue to sign checks and make deposits until a replacement was found for Kelley. At that time it would depend upon the replacement whether she (Jen Connolly) continued as deputy". M. Connolly stated this meant Jen Connolly would stay depending upon whether the replacement wanted her, or if she didn't agree with the replacement. At that time she would make a decision about resignation. Cromwell asked Kelley if

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MARCH 29, 2016  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

she knew about the RSA which states that the Deputy automatically becomes the new Treasurer. Kelley answered in the affirmative. Kelley also stated that she had made Jen Connolly aware of the RSA.

Michelle Spears requested that Jen Connolly not be discussed as she was not present. Spears then asked to understand why these resignations had occurred, stating that whatever these people have gone through is not going to change with their resignations and the next people in those positions will probably receive the same issue or problem, the stress doesn't go away when it is a new person, the stress continues. Spears said that these issues need to be understood and addressed as a town. Need to see what the true issue is. Spears asked, if there was something to keep them in their positions today, what is it? If there isn't then there is something bigger that is not understood. Spears felt that losing three officials who have been with Temple for a long time is going to hurt the town.

Steve Andersen stated that he wanted to give examples of what is happening. Andersen stated that he witnessed the letters of resignation posted on Facebook, verbatim by Connie Kieley; so that means that one of the three Selectmen sent Mrs. Kieley the letters before the Select Board had an opportunity to discuss them. Also stated that he was witness to Cromwell attacking the "Town Administrator" in front of Selectman Caisse and Betsy Perry. Andersen continued by stating Mrs. Harling was being accused of manipulating Selectmen's minutes. Andersen stated that if the Board is working together they should manage and support the staff, but managing and supporting people is far different than belittling, badgering, intimidating and doing it to individuals. Andersen further stated that Cromwell's behavior was not discussed by the Select Board after the incident occurred, that the other two Board members just let it go. Andersen's opinion is that a functional Select Board would discuss, vote, and have a plan, but he doesn't see that going on. Cromwell stated that one of the interesting things is why Andersen was even down at the office that day at Harling's desk, and that he seems to spend a lot of time down at the office. Andersen stated he was there to get a copy of the budget worksheet to decide if he was going to go to Town Meeting as a citizen. Cromwell responded and said that she was quite upset that morning, the reason dealt with the police article on the warrant, which Harling had not put that the Board had recommended that article. Cromwell had been involved with the issues in Greenville where the Greenville Select Board had been attacked about the fact that they (Greenville) didn't recommend the article to keep the police department together. Cromwell stated that the Select Board had recommended that article and Harling had failed to put the recommendation on the warrant for her own reasons. Cromwell stated that this is a critical matter and that she had gone down to suggest that Harling put errata slips into the town report to indicate that the Selectmen did recommend the warrant article. Cromwell then stated that the staff had come up with a better idea by putting stickers into the town report at that warrant article, the whole point was that this was a serious error and at that point they had not caught the other errors in the town report. She also stated that she has a serious problem with the way the budget is reported in the town report. Cromwell then stated that she did not attack Harling, and that was quite incorrect and said the problem had to be fixed.

Connie Kieley stated that 1<sup>st</sup> any document in the Selectmen's office is a public document, 2<sup>nd</sup> she is embarrassed for the town and she could tell everyone that 99% of the town are not comfortable going into the town offices because of the way they are treated.

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MARCH 29, 2016  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Betsy Perry stated she was there when Cromwell came in very angry and was very upset. Cromwell accused Harling of deliberately changing the warrant to make Cromwell look bad. Perry gave a synopsis of the incident and told Cromwell that she took it as an attack on Harling. Cromwell stated that the warrant article had been approved in the minutes and the minutes had been changed so that "they" didn't understand it, Harling deliberately omitted article 13. Perry stated that Cromwell accused Harling of changing the warrant. Cromwell stated that she saw it as a deliberate attempt to distort what the Select Board had done. Andersen made a statement about the "Town Administrator". Cromwell stated that she wished to correct Andersen referring to Harling as the "Town Administrator", saying that Harling is the "Administrative Assistant", and her job is to "help" the Selectmen. She is not a runner of the town, she is supposed to assist the Selectmen. Cromwell further stated that the Selectmen don't expect to be "cut underneath and sabotaged" in some manner. Kelley stated that if every scenario is reviewed the meeting would take all night. This is not about personal attacks. Kelley stated this is not about a difference of opinion, this is about personal attacks, intimidation, bullying, and a very caustic atmosphere.

Tamora Andrews stated that Cromwell's demeanor was proving the point by stating that Harling is deliberately undermining the Board. Her demeanor at this meeting is proving how Cromwell acted toward Harling, and Andrews asked why she shouldn't think that Cromwell was not doing what Perry and Andersen were saying. Cromwell admitted that she was angry and she thought she had a right to be. Cromwell stated that she thought it was a very serious error that needed to be corrected. Her motive was to simply get it corrected. Andrews asked Cromwell what her motive is now. Cromwell replied that her motive is to try and work with the people who resigned. Cromwell also stated that she had never spoken to Drouin, Whitcomb, or Kelley about how to do their jobs as it is not her job to do that. As elected officials their jobs are determined by State RSA's.

Olivia Holmes asked the 3 people if they would explain their experiences and requested that Harling explain how she felt about the incident raised by Andersen. Drouin stated that Cromwell had stated that she (Drouin) is hard to get along with, she (Drouin) is not trying to make a problem or create theatrics. Does not have an issue with being corrected or having a debate. Drouin then stated that Cromwell has walked up to Perry and said "do you need something to do". Cromwell asked Perry if that had occurred and Perry responded in the affirmative. Kelley stated that Cromwell continually asks her if she (Kelley) does anything besides go to the bank. Harling stated that she did feel attacked, she had already been accused of changing the warrant via a telephone conversation with Cromwell. Harling said that she had tried to explain that she had treated the police article the same way it had been treated in the past. Harling then asked Willard if she could address a couple of other accusations made in the meeting. Harling stated that the compilation of the town report was running late for various reasons, one of which was that the Board had not approved the warrant. The warrant was correct, Perry and Harling had two hours to proof read the town report. Harling then stated that the budget listed in the town report has been listed the same way for years, nothing was done this year to change the way the budget has been listed and now Cromwell and J. Kieley are stating that the budget is incorrect.

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MARCH 29, 2016  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

C. Kieley stated that this is all just personal attacks, asked Willard to please clean up the whole atmosphere at the town hall and she could give a list of names of people who are uncomfortable going and requesting information, that people get treated rudely at the town offices. Willard informed the public that he and Caisse had agreed when Caisse came on the Board that they would take any complaints in writing and signed by the complainant. Willard said it is the same procedure that Tedd Petro took, and that a complainants name does not necessarily have to be released but it does need to be signed. O. Holmes asked for clarification, did Willard mean from townspeople? Willard stated from townspeople or anyone who works for the town.

S. Andersen said that he has been counting votes for years and the fact is that Whitcomb, as Tax Collector, gets about 96% of the vote, Drouin gets about 92%, Kelley gets about 89%, but people don't know her as well. Andersen asked if these people get this percentage of the vote at elections how can the atmosphere at the town offices be as bad as C. Kieley had implied? C. Kieley stated that Andersen was talking about elected people she was not.

M. Spears stated that it is obvious that Cromwell has become defensive in this meeting. She is a manager herself and she thought that Cromwell should respect the staff and apologize. She also stated that if there is an issue it should be dealt with one on one. Spears suggested that a "liaison" be appointed for the town office, as it sounds like nothing will get done if this doesn't happen. Cromwell stated that Harling is a town employee, the others are elected officials. Her first experience with Drouin was 3 years prior when she went into the office to speak to Harling, and Drouin informed her (Cromwell) that she had to say hi to everybody. Cromwell said that when she goes into the office she now says hi to everybody, but it is hard to believe that her job as Selectman is to go in and "stroke" everybody. Cromwell stated that she doesn't mind making an apology, but she intends to do her job and this town elected her to do a job. Cromwell continued that she is an expert on budgets, she has been doing budgets for years and listed her credentials. She wants to have an operating budget that is useful. Stated that the town used to keep warrant articles separate from the budget and that is what she was trying to get Harling to do because the Selectmen and Budget Committee need to understand what the operating budget is. Cromwell stated that she had a conversation with Harling a week ago about keeping the warrant articles separate and Harling had refused to do this. Drouin stated that she had heard the conversation and Harling was trying to explain how the State requires information. Cromwell stated that Harling was not explaining anything and that she was refusing to make Cromwell's changes. Drouin stated that Harling never said she wouldn't do something, she was trying to explain.

Jeff Sonnes stated that Harling felt she was being attacked, whether Cromwell thought she was attacking or not, he felt that Cromwell should apologize. Cromwell asked what she would be apologizing for. Sonnes stated that Harling obviously felt attacked in the situation described by Andersen and Perry. Cromwell said she would not apologize for that because she did not attack. Sonnes spoke about relationships between managers and employees and stated that the situation was being made more of a public display, so even more people were coming into this. Cromwell said that she had complimented when she had seen the solution. Sonnes stated he didn't need to know everything and spoke about manager-employee relationships. Sonnes asked if there was a pattern of "shoddy work", Cromwell didn't think it was "shoddy work". Kelley said this is

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MARCH 29, 2016  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

not about one incident, not about one person, this has been building for a very long time, multiple incidents, almost daily.

Harling stated at this point the discussion was becoming about her, not about Drouin, Kelley, or Whitcomb and she would appreciate it if it stopped being about her at the present time. J. Kieley stated that it was about Harling.

Heidi Jordan said she thought it was about time to talk about procedures at the town office and the presumption that the town office is the home of the Selectmen. Willard asked Jordan to explain her statement. Jordan said other people in town have as much right as the Selectmen to be in the town office during working hours.

Kent Perry stated that he agreed with Spears and Sonnes, and that in his opinion that the problem could be solved by having a Town Administrator. This has been solved in other towns with a Town Administrator. The Town Administrator is between the employees and the Board, and the Board talks to the T.A. as a Board, not separately. This is a much more formal process and would eliminate the back and forth. Cromwell said it was interesting to her that whatever led to these resignationa, these people could have collectively gone to the Selectmen and didn't, she is puzzled by this. K. Perry said it was probably because it was between the two sides.

O. Holmes asked if any concerns had been brought to the other Selectmen. Caisse stated that he had heard concerns and that he had tried to speak to Cromwell. Holmes asked if there were any procedures that would allow the people to be more comfortable and safe in the office. Drouin thought communication is key and emails coming from Selectmen should come from all Selectmen. The Selectmen should decide as a group who will communicate. Communication should be done on a written basis so there is a history and should not be done by one individual, the Board as a whole should decide how someone should be reprimanded. Drouin gave an example about the information provided about the \$1.00 increase in the Town Clerk fee, during a conversation between Drouin and Cromwell about this subject Cromwell made the statement that she would add the dollar to fees and deduct it from Drouin's salary. Drouin responded by informing Cromwell that she would tender her resignation. Drouin said these are the kinds of things that happen behind the scenes. Communication should come from all Selectmen. Kelley backed up Drouin's statement and added that communication should be coordinated between all the Selectmen. The only exception should be an emergent situation, which should come from the Chair. The question was asked if Kelley was saying that there should be two Selectmen when one of them wishes to go into the town office. Kelley stated yes, Cromwell and Willard disagreed with that contention.

Christine Robidoux made the comment that all three Selectmen should be copied on all emails, but that it would be very difficult for two Selectmen to be in the office if one needed to obtain information for a meeting. Willard agreed with Robidoux. Willard told Cromwell that he finds her very adept at budgets, but he also finds her to be autocratic in many cases. Willard then said the he thinks Cromwell needs to be a bit more civil to those who work for the town, Cromwell responded that this is why he is Chair this year.

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MARCH 29, 2016  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Ken Caisse asked how Connie Kieley got the information about the resignations before he had even picked them up from his office mailbox and how the resignations appeared on Facebook. C. Kieley said she never put them on Facebook. There was discussion about the resignations being quoted on Facebook. C. Kieley stated that the information was not privileged and falls under the right-to-know law. Cromwell stated that the letters had been emailed and delivered on the prior Thursday and at that time fell under the right-to-know. Bill Walker asked if there had been a request for this information and Cromwell said that it is not secret information. Paul Jordan stated that the three resignation letters should not have been made public. Bill Walker stated that the resignation of a public official may be public record, but the three resignation letter should not be a public document. Andersen asked about the non-public session listed on the agenda. Cromwell said that there would be no non-public session because the discussion related to elected officials. Cromwell also noted that non-public is listed as a standard item on the Board agendas to allow the Board that option if needed.

Holmes asked if the meeting could refocus and get back to what would improve the conditions. Holmes reiterated what Drouin and Kelley had said and asked the Board if they would be willing to try improved communications. Willard stated that he is willing to work on the situation, that he thought it had been a good meeting, and that he hoped everyone who wished had gotten their chance to speak. Caisse said he would like the three people to give the Board 30 days to work something out, he thinks that these people are good employees and good elected officials. Robert Feyh stated that he likes to go into the town offices and then asked if there could be a cooling off period. Feyh then asked what would happen, did the town get to elect new people or would the Board assign people. It was explained that the Board would appoint people until the election in 2017 where people would then run for election to finish the terms.

Willard asked that the resignations be retracted and that as Chair he would try to spend more time in the office. Willard thinks that he can work with both the office and the Board as a liaison. Holmes asked what would happen if the people agreed to the 30 days. Caisse said he would like to sit down with each individual to determine the issues and see how to work on the issues. Holmes then asked Willard if she understood that he would be willing to be the liaison for the office, Willard answered in the affirmative. C. Kieley stated that there could not be one liaison, that they all have an equal right to be in the office.

Cody Charron stated that Cromwell comes into the office and "she pisses everyone off". Cromwell did not agree with Charron, saying that he is not down there often enough to observe these things, and said that she doesn't go in there that often as she finds it unpleasant herself to go into the office.

Willard recapped that there are two things on the table, 1) a 30 day "cooling off" period, 2) he would like the resignation letters retracted. Bill Walker asked what would be different during the next 30 days while working through issues. Willard suggested extra Board meetings while trying to resolve this. Cromwell asked to confirm what is going on, stating that when she goes into the office she only says hello to the elected officials but she has a right to go in and talk to the Administrative Assistant and said she has been trying to work with the A. A. to improve the budget presentation. Cromwell also said that people who come into the office area interrupt the work flow and she would like to stop that. There was discussion about interactions with elected

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MARCH 29, 2016  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

officials. Caisse stated that he would like to see people stay and is willing to do what is needed, although he could not promise anything. He doesn't have a whole lot of time, but he could be down at the end of the day. Caisse is willing to work toward an answer.

Whitcomb said that elected officials need to operate in their positions, but for Boards one person should not go off on their own unless the Board assigned them a task. Willard stated that we are coming up on April 7 and he would reiterate that he would like the people to stay. Willard then stated that he would like to stop the discussion for the night. Martin Connolly made the statement that the Chair needs to keep order in the meeting. When someone makes an outburst the Chair needs to shut them down because it disturbs the meeting.

Willard asked for a list of concerns to be discussed at the next Board meeting.

400 NH RT 45 Demolition: Willard asked to discuss the demolition at 400 NH RT 45. Move by Cromwell to table the discussion about the demolition due to the fact that Tim Fiske, Road Agent, was not in attendance, second by Caisse and voted in the affirmative.

Other Business: Caisse had one other item, it has been brought to his attention that there have been meetings between Department Heads and individual Selectmen. Move by Caisse that no Department Heads are to meet with any one Selectmen outside of a Select Board meeting without all Selectmen present. Any town business will only be done in a Select Board meeting, second by Willard and voted Willard and Caisse – yes, Cromwell - no.

Motion to adjourn at 7:52 pm by Caisse, second by Willard and voted in the affirmative.

Minutes submitted by Debra Harling