	APPROVED TOWN OF PELHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES October 15, 2013 APPROVED – October 29, 2013
CALL TO (	ORDER - approximately 6:30PM
PRESENT:	Mr. Edmund Gleason, Mr. William McDevitt, Mr. Robert Haverty, Mr. Doug Viger, Mr. Hal Lynde
ABSENT:	Town Administrator Tom Gaydos
<u>PLEDGE O</u>	F ALLEGIANCE
MINUTES 1	REVIEW:
MOTION: VOTE:	<ul><li>(Viger/McDevitt) To approve the September 17, 2013 public meeting minutes as written.</li><li>(4-0-1) The motion carried. Mr. Gleason abstained.</li></ul>
o Publ	EMENT(S):  ic is advised the Selectmen held an emergency non-public meeting on October 11, 2013 personnel matters;
o Noti	fication regarding 2013 Tax Setting – School has provided the necessary MS-27 form to State; the Town expects to have an appointment to set the tax rate in the next coupled
o Horr Gree	rible's Parade will be on Saturday, October 26, 2013at 5:30pm beginning at the Village and terminate at Memorial School; ek or Treat will be held in Pelham on Thursday, October 31, 2013 from 5pm to 8pm.
OPEN FOR	·
None.	
APPOINTM	MENT(S):
New Comm by Rich Hai	nunity Emergency Response Team ('CERT') Members Welcome and Introduction
across the na implementat	negan came forward and discussed the CERT program and their function in communities ation. CERT teaches communities to be better prepared in emergency events; since it ion there have been 2,200 teams formed, 28 of which are in New Hampshire with Pelhan st. He said this was the fifteenth year graduating people from the program. Fire Chie

James Midgley stated they appreciated everything the CERT member did and the support they 43 provided emergency responders during major incidents. Each new member was brought forward to 44 45 receive their completion certificate and shake hands with the Fire Chief and Board of Selectmen. 46

Those members were: Timothy Wanamaker, Michele Wanamaker, Joyce Keslo, Allison Lister,

Francis Garboski, Neal Morris, Irene Hinkle and Angela Hinkle.

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Chief Midgley pointed out that the CERT members assisted during major accidents and a lot of work behind the scenes that people didn't see. The members support the people doing the work; without them, it was difficult for emergency responders to do their work.

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Mr. Lynde said the Town owed a debt of gratitude to Chief Midgley and Mr. Hanegan for the initiative to form the group.

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Mr. Gleason said the revitalization of the group was encouraging. Their dedication and public service was very much appreciated.

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Mr. Lynde asked Mr. Hanegan to speak about the Medical Reserve Corps ('MRC'). Mr. Hanegan said the MRC was formed because of the events of 9-11 and the influx of people trying to help at ground zero and the question of who was accredited to provide assistance. The MRC was formed to show that people were trained to be involved in disasters situations and is a viable resource for communities across the nation. Mr. Hanegan said Pelham didn't separate the two organizations, they called it the Pelham CERT. The newer members of the group were in the process of doing their core competency training so they can be deployed in the event a situation arises. He said they are working on grants through the MRC for monetary assistance.

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#### Monica Hurley and Susan Snide – Discuss New Elderly Exemption Application

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77 78 Ms. Susan Snide, Town Assessing Assistant and Ms. Monica Hurley of Corcoran Consulting (Assessor's Agent) came forward to discuss the new proposed application for the Town's Elderly Exemption. The new application (through signature of the applicant) gave the department the ability to have a more comprehensive understanding of an applicant's income and assets than the current application. Ms. Hurley explained during the past five years, they found with the increase in 55+ condominium housing the influx in applicants for an exemption had doubled. She said the current application didn't provide a good insight to what the financial situation was for each applicant. The new format provided more detail of an applicant's eligibility and the authority to check with credit bureaus and other investigative agencies. They've added the detail of having an applicant sign under the penalty of perjury, which was allowed per RSA 72:33

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Mr. Gleason asked for a summary of what elderly exemptions were available in Pelham and what the basic criteria was for granting those. He also asked that the amount of exemptions existing in the Town be identified and burden from such that is transferred to the tax pavers.

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Ms. Hurley said one issue Pelham faced was being one of two communities in the State that offered a full exemption. She noted Pelham had a two-tiered system versus a three-tier like other communities. A spread sheet was given to the Selectmen to show the differences between communities. It was noted that Pelham provided an exemption for ages 65-74 of \$33,000 off the assessed value; ages 75-79 had 100% off the assessed value and ages 80+ also had 100% off the assessed value. Ms. Hurley said of the 259 communities in New Hampshire, there were only eight that didn't have a three-tier system; Pelham is one of them.

91 92 Mr. Viger questioned if Pelham had more population in the 75-79 age group than in the 65-74 age group. Ms. Snide didn't have the answer, but commented they had found people were 'exemption shopping' to find a community that gives them the best offer. She'd been receiving a lot of phone calls over the past year asking about Pelham's exemption. Ms. Hurley wanted to be clear they weren't trying to deter people from applying, they simply wanted to show the Selectmen there were possible alternatives for the community.

Mr. Gleason understood the purpose for the discussion was the proposal of a more stringent requirement for vetting people. Ms. Hurley said the income and asset limits wouldn't change. The proposed application would give them a lot more detailed information as to the financial background of the applicant. Mr. Gleason questioned if the proposed application had been reviewed by legal. Ms. Snide was not aware if it had. Mr. Gleason referred to a memo the Selectmen received in May that indicated 43 total 100% exemptions equaled \$9,521,300 in assessed value and equaled \$232,320 that was deferred to the rest of the community. He asked if this was a trend. Ms. Snide said the numbers in the memo were for 2012, the 2013 numbers were a little bit lower. She didn't see a trend, the numbers fluctuated. It was noted that Veteran credits were in a different category than elderly exemptions. He asked if the \$232,320 represented the 43 100% exemptions, or if there were any additional. Ms. Hurley noted once a Veteran qualified, they received a \$500 credit for the year. Ms. Snide didn't have the numbers in front of her, but suspected there were a higher number of elderly exemptions in 2012 than they did in 2013. Mr. Gleason asked if there was more than one instance of people moving into Town and then applying for an exemption. Ms. Hurley knew of two instances.

Mr. Gleason said the question for the Board was if they wanted to proceed with the modification to the vetting process. Mr. McDevitt said the situation lended itself to Pelham moving from being a small town where everyone knew everybody to becoming a big town with a 13,000 population. He supported the process, but commented that it looked daunting. He asked if residents would have assistance so people that deserved a break wouldn't be scared off. Ms. Hurley said the Assessor's office was open five days a week and had always offered to help people fill out the form. She reiterated they didn't want the application to be an intimidation factor, but would like the leeway to 'leave no stone unturned'. There had been some instances of people being less than forthright with their financial picture.

Mr. McDevitt wanted to know how long a resident received an exemption. Ms. Hurley said per the RSA, they were allowed to have them re-qualify every year, but they typically didn't have people do that and have them re-qualify once every five years. Mr. McDevitt questioned if the Town should have it done more frequently, or have everyone go through the process with the new forms.

Mr. Lynde saw that a lot of the information on the form wouldn't change, but the income and asset information could be updated on a yearly basis. Ms. Hurley agreed the information could change annually, but wanted the Selectmen to keep in mind the manpower involved with doing so. She said they had 20-30 new applicants annually and expected that number to grow.

Mr. Gleason questioned if there was a mechanism in place to know when an elderly person passed on so the exemption didn't automatically get transferred. Ms. Snide replied there was no formal mechanism. She currently went through the obituaries listings on a daily basis and used the computer to search information. During the past year there were three instances of people passing that had no obituary and no death certificate. She said no one came forward to remove the exemption. The exemptions were pulled once she was able to conduct exhaustive research.

Mr. Gleason saw two things for the Board to consider: 1) change the vetting process by revising the forms; and 2) further review of Pelham having a three-tier system. He felt they should consider

reviewing the entire process and determine ways to address the current malfunctions. He didn't want anyone to be deprived, but also felt in fairness to the taxpayer that pick up the burden, there should be a mechanism in place that allows the Town to put a lien on a property when an estate goes into probate to recover some of the tax money. Ms. Hurley said Pelham should think about having a three-tiered system to alleviate some of the strain. She said the 100% exemption or tier system could be changed through Town vote. She commented it was favorable to have a three-tier system.

Mr. McDevitt said what they could do was put forth a warrant article to implement a new system. He said there may be some people that currently qualify that may fall by the way side if this were done, but there could be a way for the Selectmen to pick those people by granting a waiver on their taxes, but also for the Town to have a lien on their property. He commented it wouldn't cost much money to send a letter once a year to those who qualify to confirm they still reside at the residence. Ms. Hurley said they went through a recertification process in 2011 whereby they sent such a letter. She discussed the many ways it was difficult to confirm information.

Mr. Gleason felt the Board should address the issue of the vetting process and determine if they would approve the recommended changes. He said they should also discuss at a later time possibly restructuring the process.

**MOTION:** (Lynde/McDevitt) To approve a modification to the vetting process currently used (for elderly exemptions) presented by Monica Hurley and Susan Snide at

the (Selectmen's) meeting (October 15, 2013).

**VOTE:** 

(5-0-0) The motion carried.

The Selectmen will take under advisement a three-tier structure. He said Ms. Snide had forwarded a proposed change to the Legislation and asked her to provide a summary of its intent. Ms. Snide said in trying to administer the elderly exemption, she found there was no consistency between that program and other programs designed to alleviate the tax burden for other things a person may have. She explained that the low-moderate income program (through the Department of Revenue) takes the entire household's income into account, not just the age-based property owner's income. She said they were finding with the elderly exemptions that the elderly homeowner's income and assets qualified and then they had additional people living with them. Those additional people enjoyed the benefit of living tax free. Ms. Snide said having a definition of 'household' income, the assets and income for everyone residing in the household could be reviewed. Another aspect she found troubling was the definition of being a New Hampshire resident; a person only had to reside in the State for three years. She noted there was no provision requiring a person to be a United States citizen.

Mr. Gleason recognized that the discussion was for information only. The proposed Legislation had been forwarded to Senator Chuck Morseto bring it forward. Mr. Gleason asked if the situation was a trend within the State, or if it was something unique to Pelham. Ms. Hurley said there had been an increase in applicants for all the communities she was the Assessor; however, Pelham had doubled anything she'd seen. She felt the situation was due to the Town having a 100% exemption. Ms. Snide said she would love the Selectmen's support and wanted to bring it to their attention. Both Mr. McDevitt and Mr. Gleason said they supported the proposal.

Mr. Gleason thanked Ms. Hurley and Ms. Snide for bringing the situation forward for discussion.

#### Charlene Takesian, Town Treasurer -

- Town Investment Policy Approval
- o Town Banking Moving to Enterprise Bank Update
- Vote on Authorization for Chairman Ed Gleason to Sign Loan Documents with Enterprise Bank

Ms. Takesian came forward to address the Board. She began by discussing the proposed Investment Policy previously forwarded to the Selectmen for review. She felt that the proposed policy was more specific to Pelham than the boiler plate policy they previously used.

Mr. Gleason was in favor of the proposed policy. He reminded the Board of the criticism received by the Town Auditor was that the Town didn't have an investment policy. He said the RSA stipulate that the Selectmen should sign off on a policy every year. The intent was to review the policy and sign-off so it would be in place.

Mr. McDevitt asked that the policy be clarified for the public. Ms. Takesian explained that taxes were collected twice a year. During those two periods of time the Town has a lot of money not needed for operating funds. That money is put into places so it can remain liquid, but at the same time maximize the amount of interest on those funds. Ms. Takesian said she was limited, per State Statute, what kinds of things the Treasurer could invest in and discussed where she deposited money.

Mr. Gleason said the policy set forth a documented procedure for anyone in the Treasurer position and at the same time demonstrated to the auditor that the Town had a policy in place to ensure they were complying with State law.

**MOTION:** (McDevitt/Haverty) To accept and approve the Investment Policy (presented).

**VOTE:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

Ms. Takesian then discussed moving Town banking to Enterprise Bank. She said she was always looking for better options for the Town to invest their money in a bank willing to participate in the Town. She said Enterprise Bank had demonstrated they were a community bank willing to help the community. When speaking to them about moving the Town's money, Enterprise Bank offered better interest rates, which would make more money for the Town than they were making at Sovereign Bank. She said they were currently in the process of moving the Town's money from Sovereign Bank to Enterprise Bank. Some accounts will remain open at Sovereign because there were outstanding checks that needed to clear or have it determined how to handle those funds. She said they would have everything they needed to move the accounts by November 1<sup>st</sup>. The accounts have been included in the Town's MuniSmart computer system. The Planning Department escrow money has already been moved to Enterprise. Ms. Takesian noted for a short period of time there would be two accounts for each one of the Town's funds (one at Sovereign, one at Enterprise) until they could determine what to do with the old outstanding items. She was happy about the process and felt it was a good move for the Town.

Mr. Gleason asked if there would be any savings of bank fees or improvements by moving to Enterprise Bank. Ms. Takesian believed Enterprises' fee structure was similar to Sovereign. The advantage of being with Enterprise is they will take the money in the checking account and put it into an overnight sweep account to earn interest in addition to earning interest credit.

Mr. Gleason saw there was a request for the Board's Chairman to sign off on the loan documents with Enterprise Bank. He asked if the document was for the conservation loan used for negotiation of the

- purchase of land. Ms. Takesian said that was correct; it is a \$600,000 note that covered the cost of two parcels of land purchased by the Town. She said usually there were five Selectmen that sign that type of document, but in this case the attorneys came to the conclusion of having one Selectman sign the document. She said the Board would need to take a vote to do so. She summarized that it would
- be a 10-year loan (as specified in the warrant article passed for the \$3,000,000 to purchase
- conservation land) and the loan payment will be \$60,000 plus interest per year.

MOTION: (Lynde/Haverty) To authorize Chairman Edmund Gleason to sign on behalf of

the Board of Selectmen for a loan of \$600,000 from Enterprise Bank.

**VOTE:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

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#### Roland Soucy - New Raymond Park Building Proposal

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Roland Soucy, Town Building Inspector and Brian Johnson, Parks & Recreation Director came forward to discuss the new building proposal for Raymond Park. Mr. Soucy reviewed the proposed plan of the building. A 2,000gallon per day septic system will be installed, as approved by the State. Electric service will be pulled from the exiting service. He said there are a few minor changes they will be making on the plan, such as adding a grease trap in the building.

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Mr. Gleason asked if there was a necessity to be ADA compliant. Mr. Soucy said the bathrooms were all ADA compliant; they had a concrete slab floor with floor drains. Mr. Gleason wanted to know if there was any need for ramps. Mr. Soucy answered no; the building was grade level. He noted there was a storage area in the basement of the building.

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Mr. Lynde questioned if the building was being constructed into the hill. Mr. Soucy answered yes; alongside the existing concrete stairs. Mr. Lynde asked if the building was sized similar to the building at Muldoon Park. Mr. Soucy didn't recall, but believed it was pretty close.

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Mr. Soucy told the Board that he suggested to the Town Administrator that they have an invited list of 3-4 bidders, versus having a public bid, given they were heavy on the masonry aspect. The intent was to have one contractor do the whole job. Mr. Gleason asked where funding for the building would come from. Mr. Johnson said it would come from the revolving account through funds raised by travel soccer and Outlaws lacrosse. He said they would know exactly what funding was needed when the final bids came back; if they needed additional funding they would do so.

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Mr. Lynde wanted to know the timeframe for construction. Mr. Soucy said if they could get the numbers back early enough they could get the building done before the snow flies. Mr. Haverty questioned who would manage the construction project. Mr. Soucy said he would. Mr. Lynde questioned how it would be handled if someone questions why they weren't invited to bid. Mr. Soucy said he was seeking feedback from the Selectmen. The Selectmen discussed the bidding process and how to proceed. Mr. Soucy noted all the contractors were from Pelham. He had a list of basic specifications that would be used for the contractors to review.

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Mr. Haverty understood the building was being called a snack shack and questioned if it would have a stove inside with a hood. Mr. Soucy answered no; there wouldn't be any grills, the most they would have is crock pots and possibly a hot dog machine. Mr. Johnson described the building as having drinks, pizza, pretzels and things of that nature.

280 281 Mr. Gleason asked if Mr. Soucy would be handling the bid process. Mr. Soucy offered to do so. He said he could meet with the contractors, review the plans, go over the job and field their questions. Mr. Gleason said Mr. Soucy had handled the Senior Center addition in the same manner proposed. That process was successful and cost effective. Mr. Viger noted that the proper permits would be pulled and inspections would be conducted.

Mr. Lynde asked that the Selectmen have the opportunity to review the bids. Mr. Soucy said his intention was to pull information together and provide a package to the Selectmen.

**MOTION:** (Lynde/Viger) To authorize Roland Soucy in conjunction with Brian Johnson to put out for bid the snack shack proposed at Elmer G. Raymond Memorial Park, near the soccer/lacrosse fields, in accordance with the plan presented to the Selectmen at their October 15, 2013 meeting.

**VOTE:** (5-0-0) The motion carried.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

# **Throwing Candy in Parades – Discussion**

Previously the Selectmen's attention was called to concern noticed at Old Home Day by resident Mike Sherman during open forum discussion. The issue was raised that floats were throwing candy into the crowd and children were escaping their parent's protection to run out to the street. Mr. McDevitt said it had been the Town's practice for the Police approve parade permits. He then read aloud a portion of RSA 286:2 that indicated the Selectmen are to approve a license for parades (and other activities). He said they should discuss this with the Police. There was a brief discussion, Mr. Viger suggested having a list of guidelines for those applying for a parade permit. He volunteered to put that list together for the Board to review/discussion. Mr. McDevitt said he could speak to the Police Department. The Selectmen will discuss the topic at their next meeting.

The Selectmen stated the Horribles Parade would not be affected by their decisions. Mr. Gleason asked Mr. Viger to speak with Rich Hanegan to reiterate no candy should be thrown in the street during the parade. Mr. Viger said they typically didn't; there was a front end loader filled with candy that was parked off the roadway.

#### **Roundabout Update**

Mr. Gleason commented during the past week Fair Point was working in Town at the roundabout and indicated they would complete their process, remove the telephone pole (which had occurred) and get their underground cables moved. He stated there was sufficient room to make (Acorn Drive) a two-way road. However, the Town Administrator had spoken to both the State and Continental Paving and was informed by Continental Paving they were done for the year and had no interest in coming back. The State didn't want to direct Continental to come back in because they would then have to pay Continental.

Mr. Gleason said the difficulty he had with the intersection was the angle of the intersection. He asked if the Board wanted to have the Highway Safety Committee review the area. Mr. Lynde said he observed that traffic went smoother whent the two-way portion of the road was closed in front of the old fire station only allowing south bound vehicles. He questioned if that configuration would work full-time. It was the Board's feeling that the Highway Safety Committee should review the

Acorn Street/Old Bridge Street intersection and possibly determine temporary improvements to mitigate the safety risk. Mr. Gleason will ask the Planning Director to convene a meeting.

#### **Keach Nordstrom Response to Surrey Lane Issues**

Mr. Gleason said during the Board's meeting of September 17<sup>th</sup> the Selectmen had a discussion relative to Surrey Lane and the Fox's and Drouins had provided a list of concerns. The Town's engineer Keach Nordstrom was asked to review the concerns. Mr. Gleason was advised that Keach Nordstrom had reviewed the Selectmen's meeting and the concerns expressed by the Fox and Drouin families. A letter of response was sent to the Fox and Drouin families by Keach Nordstrom; the Town had not heard back from those families. Mr. Gleason briefly ran through the points of concern that had been identified in the letter and Keach Nordstrom's responses.

#### **Town Webpage Discussion**

Mr. Gleason said it was brought to his attention by Mr. McDevitt that the Town webpage was out dated in many respects. Mr. McDevitt said the concern he brought forward was the amount of old information and outdated references contained on the site. He wanted to make sure who ever was responsible for posting information also made sure it was refreshed. Mr. Gleason suggested having a discussion on a future agenda. It was his understanding that Victor Danevich was attempting to have the webpage updated. Mr. Viger suggested in the future a volunteer might be able to be asked to assist. Mr. Haverty suggested it might be a good academic venture for the computer club or community service to consider.

Mr. Gleason said he would add an agenda item for further discussion at the next meeting.

# **Summary of Budget Committee 2014 Town Budget Vote**

 Mr. Viger, Selectmen Representative to the Budget Committee provided an update of adjustments made during the Budget Committee's meeting/vote on the Town budgets. The total reduction made to the budget was \$42,076. The end result of the meeting was a Town budget of \$13,291,750. Mr. Viger said the Budget Committee gave the Selectmen many compliments on the budget presented by the Selectmen, the work done by department heads and the transparency the Town has in presenting their budget.

The Pelham Food Pantry made a request for a donation during the Budget Committee meeting. Mr. Lynde questioned why they hadn't initially come to the Selectmen with the request. Mr. Viger said the Food Pantry had a new director and didn't realize there was a budget line for charitable donations.

Mr. Gleason felt it was evident that the Selectmen tried to control budget growth in their review given the increase from last year was a total of 3.4%. He said they tried to educate people that there is an inherent growth based on contractual obligations. Typically there is a 2%-2.5% increase each year. He said the tax payers should recognize that the 3.4% budget increase that was offered included a 2.6% of inherent growth. This shows there's very little discretionary money in the budget for departments above the default budget. Mr. Gleason felt the proposed budget spoke well for the departments in terms of their willingness to hold the line and meet objectives.

Mr. McDevitt thanked Mr. Viger for his work on the Budget Committee. Mr. Viger said the School would begin to present their budget to the committee next week.

## **Preliminary Review of 2014 Town Warrant Articles**

378 379 380 381	Mr. Gleason wanted the Selectmen to begin thinking of potential warrant articles. He asked the Town Administrator to put a sheet together, the only item at this time was for \$26,000 for gas/diesel pump replacement at the Transfer Station.  Mr. Viger suggesting asking the Executive Secretary to send a memo to department heads to present any warrant articles they may have. The Selectmen discussed possible articles they would bring forward. Mr. Gleason will ask the Executive Secretary to send department heads a memo. He asked that the Selectmen bring their suggested articles forward for the next meeting. He commented that they were striving to reduce the tax rate by \$1.				
382 383 384 385 386 387					
388 389	TOWN ADMINISTRATOR / SELECTMEN REPORTS				
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391 392 393 394 395 396	Mr. Lynde updated the Board regarding the Substance Abuse event held within the schools. He said it was an extremely successful event and received a lot of positive feedback. They are now following up on what the next steps will be. They will try to work in coordination with MRC to request grant funding to work on peer outreach. He said there was a lot more work to be done. Mr. Gleason said the group did a great job and was well organized. They were congratulated for taking initiative.				
390 397	There were no additional reports offered.				
398	There were no ununional reports offered.				
399	REQUEST FOR NON-PUBLIC SESSION				
400	MOTION: ROLL CALL:		n-public session per RSA 91-A:3,II, a (Personnel) t-Yes; Mr. Viger-Yes; Mr. Haverty-Yes;		
401 402 403 404	It was noted that when the Board returned, after the non-public session, the Board would not take any other action publicly, except to possibly seal the minutes of the non-public session and to adjourn the meeting. The Board entered into a non-public session at approximately8:20pm.				
405 406	The Board returned to public session at approximately 8:45pm.				
	MOTION:	(Haverty/Viger) To seal the min	nutes of the non-public session indefinitely.		
407 408	VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.  ADJOURNMENT				
	MOTION:	(Haverty/Viger)To adjourn the me	eeting.		
	VOTE:	(5-0-0) The motion carried.			
409 410	The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 pm.				
411			Pagnostfully submitted		
412 413			Respectfully submitted, Charity A. Landry		
414			Recording Secretary		
415					