

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
January 18, 2017

PRESENT: Mark Fougere, Chairman
Kevin Federico, Vice Chairman
Gary Daniels, Member
Mike Putnam, Member
Mark Bender, Town Administrator
Darlene J. Bouffard, Recording Secretary
Mike McInerney, Videographer

WILTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN: Kermit Williams, William Condra, Steven McDonough

MONT VERNON BOARD OF SELECTMEN: Jack Esposito, Joan Quinlan Jr., James Whipple

LYNDEBOROUGH BOARD OF SELECTMEN: Lee Mayhew, Mark Schultz, Russ

MACC Base Staff
Milford Police Chief Viola
Milford Police Captain Frye
Milford Police Captain Pelletier
Milford Ambulance Director Eric Schelberg
Milford Fire Chief Jack Kelly
Lyndeborough Police Chief Rainsford Deware
Wilton Police Chief Brent Hautnen

EXCUSED: Katherine Bauer, Member

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & PUBLIC SPEAKING INSTRUCTIONS: Chairman Fougere called the public meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., introduced Board members and then led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Fougere indicated that those people in the audience who want to speak or add to the discussion should please use a microphone in order to be heard on the PEG Access live broadcast. Chairman Fougere thanked everyone for coming in and started by having each Board of Selectmen introduce its members.

2. ISSUES: Chairman Fougere indicated there has been a lot of discussion about MACC Base. Milford has concerns with the technology and asked that Vice Chairman Federico take over the discussion from that point on behalf of the town. Vice Chairman Federico explained he has been on the Board of Selectmen for four years and is a former employee of MACC Base. He stated this conversation is surreal because when it is talked about it is clear nobody wants change. As a former MACC employee and former ambulance service employee, he thinks MACC Base is a fantastic organization; a lot of attention has been given to it, but we are all here tonight not because of the personnel or the Director of the service; they continue to do outstanding work. Jason does a great job as do the dispatchers; this is not about who controls the service, we are looking at equipment that has been in place for over thirty years. Some has been upgraded, most has not. It is a technology issue. Financial and technology are the two issues. Vice Chairman Federico thinks these issues have come up with the inability for the Milford Police to communicate to each other over their radios in different areas of town. This has been ongoing and they have done the best they can to resolve the issues. The limitations in the intermunicipal agreement limit them the ability to purchase new equipment. Vice Chairman Federico asked what it will cost to upgrade.

MACC Director Jason Johnson responded that he has come up with a plan for about \$1.6 million. Vice Chairman Federico noted that he does not want to get into the details of that plan tonight, the issue is how to fund it. MACC cannot have a Capital Reserve Fund, they can only spend what is in the budget. The Boards of Selectmen need to discuss this; we are looking at service issues with communication, not personnel, but technology. The Fire Department has resolved issues but we have been band-aiding things together and putting in improvements to keep it running. We are now at a point where we have to look at spending capital to do so. If we put a quarter million into the budget, it goes beyond what one town can afford. Vice Chairman Federico also talked to the town attorney about a Capital Reserve Fund for this equipment. Each town would need to set up their own Capital Reserve Fund. We need to start this conversation to talk about what we are looking at. We are in this together.

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2 Lyndeborough Selectman Lee Mayhew asked who provided legal advice? Vice Chairman Federico an-
3 swered the town attorney Bill Drescher, then asked what it would take to resolve Milford's communication issues.
4 A couple of different things were done and looked at. Nothing has been decided, we need to have all the towns in-
5 volved in how to do this. One technology proposal is to change to microwave technology so it would be different
6 and more advanced. In the 90's we put in 50s technology. There is newer technology out there that is faster and
7 better but is that the route to go? If so, Vice Chairman Federico said it affects all of us; we need to go over what we
8 can and cannot do. Milford's number one issue is public safety. Communications as they are now do not solve that;
9 we are here to get thoughts from everyone. We have a lot of different facts. We do know one thing, regionalization
10 is the best outcome. We all agree on that. Let's stay away from the technology for now, we can have that conversa-
11 tion at a different time.
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13 Wilton Selectman Condra asked if Milford has talked about a new intermunicipal agreement with more
14 flexibility? Vice Chairman Federico said we have presented it to the Attorney, and asked how funds can be raised,
15 the answer we received was they cannot have a capital reserve fund. We then talked about them borrowing money,
16 but the best we can do is re-write a regional agreement. Even with that, if we move forward, until the funds are put
17 into a capital reserve fund, nothing could be done until all the funding comes into place, so nothing could happen
18 until it is all there. Another option was to put the dispatch center under one town and sign service agreements with
19 the other towns.
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21 Mont Vernon Selectman Esposito said Milford Police has a problem with the portables, and we solved it by
22 buying new radios, so it is not a MACC Base problem. Vice Chairman Federico said that was the question years
23 ago, is it a town of Milford problem or a MACC problem; but for the town to invest money, where is the best place
24 to invest it; are we going to put repeaters in all the cars? There are experts here in the room who say that is not the
25 best solution for Milford. Selectman Esposito said if an individual town would spend the money to solve the prob-
26 lem, he does not see why the other towns would need to solve the problem. The town problem should remain with
27 the town. Vice Chairman Federico said this brings the question back to Milford, do repeaters in the car solve the
28 problem or is it something else, and do we need to move to new technology?
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30 Lyndeborough Selectman Mayhew stated the agreement was drafted by Bill Drescher, the towns that
31 signed the initial agreement did not want it for more than one year. The solution is that the agreement needs to be
32 amended; it needs to be include language that they can have a capital reserve fund, Chapter 53 states that. For three
33 years, Vice Chairman Federico has been told we cannot do that. Selectman Mayhew said you cannot do it with the
34 current by-laws but the Milford/Wilton sewer agreement is levied with other by-laws. Vice Chairman Federico said
35 that would be a different form of agreement than it is now, it would need to be changed to a regional agreement.
36 That is something Vice Chairman Federico thinks should be looked at. Selectman Mayhew asked to hear from the
37 Milford Police about the analysis of the problems.
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39 Police Chief Viola indicated the problems are not dispatch, it is when the officers are talking to the other
40 officers and they cannot hear. But MACC Base can hear and they have to relay. Some information can be lost by
41 having it go through dispatch. Wilton also runs into the same issue. There have been ideas such as a repeater but
42 that is a short term solution. Other solutions have also been discussed. We have one of the best radios out there, it
43 is not the equipment, it is antenna site and technology issues. We are looking for a long term solution. One of the
44 things Jason has brought up was going to a different channel. But if we change to a different channel, we do not
45 know what is going on in another town.
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47 Fire Chief Kelly is not having any problems with radios at all, but they got a repeater a couple years ago.
48 Lyndeborough Selectman Mark Schultz said that his town is a customer of MACC Base and they are not in the
49 group. Years ago we withdrew which he thinks was a big mistake. He has always been very pleased with the ser-
50 vice. Selectman Schultz appreciates the kind words about the MACC Base staff, and is looking at the portable radi-
51 os, noting there was always a problem with trying to reach one side of town from the other unless you have a repeat-
52 er system, his concern with the money is the cost benefit. Officer safety is important but there was always a system
53 where the officers always know what is going on, MACC Base is a great organization and he hopes that everyone
54 has an open mind and tries to work something out for the future. He is concerned about Milford totally trying to run
55 the show and that has been a concern. Vice Chairman Federico wanted all of the selectmen here to talk about this.
56 Milford does not want to go on our own. We want to resolve issues that face us and identify what the costs are. If
57 we decide to move to new technology who pays for it? No decisions have been made other than talking to everyone
58 tonight and getting input from the other towns. That is where we are at. We should set up a subgroup to continue to

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1 have conversations but at some point things are not going to work for Milford. Vice Chairman Federico does not
2 want to see MACC Base go anywhere. It is a great organization. Vice Chairman Federico remembers the day that
3 he heard a second tone and if you are on a different frequency that is lost.

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5 Joe Torrie said a two-way study was done in his town and might be helpful to other towns. Vice Chairman
6 Federico wants to share that information, but not at this meeting, once there is a subgroup established that would be
7 where that can be discussed, tonight is for an open conversation not for details. Vice Chairman Federico also noted
8 that Milford does not want to offset the expenses to the other towns, but if the best fix for Milford is to change the
9 technology, then everyone else would need to do the same.

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11 Selectman Esposito said the town would not have an extra \$25,000 in the middle of the year to upgrade, his
12 concern is that there is no maintenance line item for that activity. Vice Chairman Federico agreed, it is not a small
13 item. Selectman Mayhew said we are all willing to go forward in a cohesive partnership, but he does not think Mil-
14 ford should have two votes. If there are four people, it should be equal. Vice Chairman Federico stated that can be
15 a topic of discussion at a different point in time. The lion's share is paid by Milford, we can talk about that. Se-
16 lectman Mayhew stated Milford will always have the lion's share of the calls but if we work together we need to
17 have equal shares of the decision. Chairman Fougere said we want to solve the problem today. Selectman Mayhew
18 suggested we should be able to fix it by 2018; it is a simple fix, if you change the way it is composed you have ac-
19 cess to other actions. Wilton agrees that changing the intermunicipal agreement to be like the sewer agreement
20 would help; if we are going to have any kind of capital investment, it should be a decision made by all four towns.

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22 Vice Chairman Federico is glad that we had this conversation; this is something we all need to take steps to
23 resolve. We should organize a subcommittee to meet again. Selectman Putnam said there is a Board of Governor's
24 meeting coming up. Vice Chairman Federico indicated the reorganization of the agreement should probably not be
25 at the BOG meeting, the Boards of Selectmen should be involved. They can do that through their representatives to
26 the BOG.

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28 Director Johnson said as far as the BOG, he agrees it is supposed to be a two-way street. Mr. Johnson
29 asked why he was not notified of this meeting tonight? Vice Chairman Federico indicated this was something need-
30 ed with the Boards of Selectmen not the BOG, there is nothing being hidden and he apologized for not inviting
31 MACC Base personnel. Mr. Johnson indicated that MACC has already received \$180,000 in grant funding for the
32 microwave technology. Vice Chairman Federico did not want to get into the details tonight, this is not the time or
33 place to talk about the details of the technology. Jason Johnson explained the agreement was written up based on
34 population, that cannot be changed, but it can be done another way such as based on valuation in each town.

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36 Ray Enson, resident, asked if the radio infrastructure includes the cost to renovate the police department or
37 how will that affect taxes? Selectman Schultz indicated it is important to keep the Director of MACC involved in
38 this. Vice Chairman Federico said he was not excluded on purpose, he was not integral to this conversation which
39 was about re-writing the agreement. Once a subcommittee is established, he will be invited to those meetings. Vice
40 Chairman Federico stated that Milford is not talking about taking control away from anyone. All concurred that
41 there should be another conversation about where to go from here. Vice Chairman Federico and Selectman Putnam
42 will look at a calendar and identify some possible dates to meet again. Once the representatives for each town are
43 put forward, they can decide what time and date to meet. Vice Chairman Federico said he will start an e-mail chain.

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45 **3. ADJOURNMENT:** Selectman Daniels moved to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. Vice Chairman Federico seconded. All were
46 in favor. Motion passed 5/0.

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Mark Fougere, Chairman

Kevin Federico, Vice Chairman

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Gary Daniels, Member

Katherine Bauer, Member

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Mike Putnam, Member