

**GILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL SESSION
MARCH 5, 2008**

The Board of Selectmen convened in a special session on Wednesday, March 5, 2008, at 8:35 a.m., at the Gilford Town Hall, 47 Cherry Valley Road, Gilford, NH. Selectmen present were Connie Grant and Gus Benavides. Also present were Town Administrator Evans Juris, Assistant Town Administrator Debra Shackett and Administrative Secretary Sandra Bailey. Absent was Chairman Alice Boucher.

The Selectmen recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chairman Grant stated that the purpose of today's special session is to review the letter recently received from NH DES on the Liberty Hill Disposal Site and determine what course of action the Board needs to pursue. She further stated that NH DES will conduct an informational meeting on Monday, March 24, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at the Gilford Town Hall regarding DES' evaluation of the proposed remedial action plan.

Selectman Benavides asked if he could go through the report page by page so that he could address various concerns that he has. On Page 1, he pointed out that the DES chose alternative RAA5 as the most favorable alternative with the most favorable balance of benefits and cost. On Page 2, Selectman Benavides expressed concern with the use of a slurry wall, which if built incorrectly, might not contain the remaining contaminants. He also feels that the proposed plan will give people a false sense of security when walking on the site.

Page 3 indicates that contaminants attributable to coal tar have not been detected in any nearby drinking water wells, although they have been detected in monitoring wells. Also mentioned in the report is the fact that it is expected to take approximately 35 years for the groundwater adjacent to Jewett Brook to reach quality standards.

On Page 4 (b), Selectman Benavides pointed out that the contaminants within the slurry wall area would continue to exceed acceptable standards. Page 5 indicates a cost comparison of \$15.9 million for 100% removal and \$8.7 million for 80% removal. Selectman Benavides stated that he feels that cost was the deciding factor here. Page 8 indicates that it is very "unlikely" that nearby drinking water wells will be affected by the site in the future and Selectman Benavides does not feel that this determination is sufficient.

Finally, on Page 9, Selectman Benavides stated that he is not comfortable with the fact that a financial assurance plan is not required. He is also

concerned with who will be monitoring the slurry walls and what would happen if the company in question were to go out of business, with no escrow account required. In closing, he feels that there are too many “what ifs” within the plan that could potentially affect future generations.

Selectman Grant suggested that a letter be sent to Liberty Hill residents in the affected area, along with a copy of the DES response to the remedial action plan. She also suggested that a meeting be held next week, prior to the March 24, 2008 DES meeting, to give these residents an opportunity to express their views on the DES response.

Assistant Town Administrator Shackett suggested that the Board’s concerns be conveyed to these residents, so that they will know the Board’s position prior to the meeting. Town Administrator Juris read through the draft letter he has prepared for Liberty Hill residents. Assistant Town Administrator Shackett suggested strengthening the letter so that the residents will be aware of the Board’s support.

It was also suggested that the letter and DES response be placed on the Town’s website. Brief discussion ensued on the matter of assessment reductions that have been made in the area. Town Administrator Juris will consult with Town Counsel on appeal process, which is very detailed and specific. Selectman Benavides suggested that Town Counsel could refer the Board to an environmental attorney.

Brief discussion then ensued on the Belknap County Budget Hearing that was held on Tuesday, March 4, 2008. Selectman Grant updated the Board on the meeting, which she attended.

The meeting for Liberty Hill residents, along with the Board of Selectmen, will be scheduled for Thursday, March 13, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at the Gilford Town Hall.

The Board adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra J. Bailey
Administrative Secretary