

**GILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL SESSION
FEBRUARY 21, 2008**

The Board of Selectmen convened in a special session on Thursday, February 21, 2008, at 2:13 p.m., at the Gilford Town Hall, 47 Cherry Valley Road, Gilford, NH. Selectmen present were Chairman Alice Boucher and Connie Grant. Also present were Town Administrator Evans Juris, Assistant Town Administrator Debra Shackett and Administrative Secretary Sandra Bailey. Absent was Selectman Gus Benavides.

(Prior to this special session, at 1:00 p.m., an on-site visit was held at the Liberty Hill disposal site. In attendance were Selectmen Boucher and Grant, Town Administrator Juris, members of NH DES, and several members of the public and local press.)

The Selectmen recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Boucher opened the meeting and asked the representatives from NH DES to introduce themselves. In attendance were Mike McCluskey, Project Manager for the Liberty Hill Site, John Regan, Supervisor of the Hazardous Waste Remediation Bureau; and Thomas Burack, Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Services.

Chairman Boucher then asked the representatives from DES to begin the meeting with any comments they would like to make to the Board. Commissioner Burack began by thanking Chairman Boucher for the opportunity to have this meeting held on short notice and to answer questions the Board may have on the project.

Chairman Boucher stated that the most pressing issue is to know when a decision will be reached and the cleanup is scheduled to begin. Commissioner Burack responded by stating that a meeting was held last Friday with Governor Lynch and Senator Sgambati, who both felt it was very important for DES to meet with the Board of Selectmen prior to rendering a decision. He further stated that a preliminary response will be made by Friday, February 29, 2008.

Following the preliminary response, a public informational meeting will be held in Gilford in March. Keyspan will respond in detail and there will be a thirty (30) day comment period following the public hearing. DES will then review Keyspan's response and design a plan. Commissioner Burack stated that it was very helpful to be able to visit the site today.

He further stated that there will be significant and complex remediation, which would require approximately 18-24 months to finish the process.

Chairman Boucher reiterated that the Town of Gilford would like all of the contaminated material removed and assured Commissioner Burack that full removal would be supported by the citizens of Gilford. Chairman Boucher also pointed out the issue of significant cancer cases within the affected area.

Selectman Grant asked Commissioner Burack for a clarification of the timeline involved in the cleanup project. She further stated that the Town would like to see

a definitive timeline – when will we see trucks? Commissioner Burack responded that it is hard to provide a definitive date at this time. This will be a step by step process that may require additional data along the way. He stated that the cleanup could possibly begin in late 2008 or spring of 2009. Selectman Grant reiterated that she would like this project to be on the State's front burner, with concern that the situation could worsen.

Project Manager Mike McCluskey stated that the site will not get worse and there is no immediate risk. He further stated that he would also like to move the project along but the sequence of events can be slow. Once a decision is reached, DES will need to address comments that have been received, and this could take time. Once a final decision is reached, DES will inform Keyspan that they must move forward.

Chairman Boucher thanked the representatives from DES for meeting with the Board and having the site visit. Town Administrator Juris expressed concern with proposed timeframe for cleanup. He reiterated the time period that has been involved so far, commencing in November 2004. Property values in the area have been significantly affected and since full removal will take two (2) years, he would like to see the cleanup begin before 2009.

He also added that he does not want this cleanup to be spread out over decades, as was the case with the Route 11-C fire training site. Town Administrator Juris thanked the representatives from DES for their efforts, but would like some definitive action. Commissioner Burack responded that DES is committed to moving the project along.

Assistant Town Administrator Shackett asked Commissioner Burack to clarify the timeframe, beginning with a preliminary response being made by next Friday, February 29, 2008. After Commissioner Burack provided clarification, Chairman Boucher asked him who is the final authority in this matter? Commissioner Burack responded that DES is the final authority and a decision will be made according to regulatory standards.

In closing, Commissioner Burack thanked the Town of Gilford for holding today's meeting and encouraged them to continue working closely with John Regan and Mike McCluskey.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra J. Bailey
Administrative Secretary