

**SPECIAL JOINT BOARD OF SELECTPERSON'S MEETING MINUTES**  
**Town of Rumford and Town of Mexico**  
**November 24, 2014**  
**Mexico Town Hall**  
**Calvin P. Lyons Meeting Room**

**PRESENT:**

Town of Rumford: Chairperson Gregory Buccina, Vice-Chairperson Jeffrey Sterling, Selectperson Bradford Adley, Selectperson Frank DiConzo, Selectperson Mark Belanger, Town Manager John Madigan

Town of Mexico Selectpersons: Andy Dupuis, Reggie Arsenault, Byron Ouellette, Albert Aniel

Absent: Richard Philbrick,

**ATTENDEES:** Sheriff Wayne Gallant, Deputy Hart Daley, Police Chiefs Stacy Carter, Roy Hodsdon and Richard Pickett, Dixfield Board of Selectpersons and Town Manager Carlo Puia.

1. Meeting Called to Order by Town of Mexico Vice-Chairperson Byron Ouellette at 6:00 p.m.
2. All present Pledged Allegiance to the American Flag
3. Discussion with Sheriff Wayne Gallant regarding Police Coverage

The Town Manager provided the Boards with copies of the proposed budget for police coverage from the Oxford County Sheriff's Office and also provided copies of the recent recommendation for police services from Municipal Resources.

The consensus from the board members was that the meeting was a workshop and no members from the audience would be allowed to speak. The Town of Dixfield had expressed interest in police department consolidation and would be discussed after the scheduled meeting. The Sheriff began discussing his budget proposal at 6:10 pm. He presented a 2 year proposal, 12 man department with 1 detective and with 2 and 3 man teams. 2 officers would be scheduled between 1:30 am and 6 am. He also stated that Oxford County has 5 officers on patrol in the County and 4 detectives that would be available when necessary. The contract price for this service would be \$1,321,252 for the first year and \$1,185,851 for the second year. The contract could also be written for 5 years if desired. Several questions were asked by Selectmen and responses were given by the Sheriff and Deputy.

Will 12 officers be designated to Rumford and Mexico? Yes, but they would respond elsewhere if needed under mutual aid as is currently done.

Will the Explorer Post be continued? The Sheriff does not allow youth to ride in vehicles.

Will the ATV patrols be continued? Yes, if grants are written and awarded.

Will DARE be continued? Yes The County currently budgets to support DARE.

Will the senior citizen watch program be continued? The Sheriff could not answer right now. He would have to live within his budget. He would provide monthly reports. The County has a designated court officer. Each officer would be provided his own vehicle.

Other areas of discussion included: The County union contract, grants for school officers, hiring standards, how was the Sheriff's plan was put together, how a funding formula should be based,

what the timeline would be considering the towns' fiscal year and the county's calendar year, law enforcement liability, county pay scale, hospital coverage and toll roads. Other ideas expressed included local control, officers should be part of the community and what would happen if both police departments were simply disbanded. The Sheriff informed the boards that the county must provide law enforcement in towns with no police department. The members thanked the Sheriff and continued the meeting at 7:40 pm with the Rumford and Mexico Police Chiefs.

#### 4. Discussion with Police Chief Stacy Carter and Police Chief Roy Hodsdon

The Town Manager provided copies of the proposed budget for police coverage provided by Rumford Police Chief Stacy Carter and Mexico Police Chief Roy Hodsdon.

Chief Carter expressed several concerns about a reduced force when both departments are struggling now to keep up with the amount of calls. A combined department could save \$100,000 from what is currently budgeted in both towns. The Chiefs' proposal would include 16 officers. Several thousands of dollars would initially have to be paid out for accumulated vacation and sick time if the departments were disbanded and \$400,000 worth of equipment would need to be dealt with in Rumford alone. The towns have a huge heroin problem and they felt that crimes would not be reported. A combined department could better address the problems we deal with; patrol, response, paper work, higher standards, interviews, follow-ups, handling other calls, subpoenas, court paperwork, training, backlog of open investigations that need to be cleaned up, hospital requests and mental health issues. 12 officers is not enough to get the work done. The demographics of our area show a large low-income population. A large amount of calls are from that population group. Population is not the same as demographics. Other matters to consider include revenues brought in each year and money not spent each year goes back to the town's general fund. That would not happen under contract with the Sheriff.

Selectmen expressed other comments. 900 calls were reported in Mexico over the last 4 months. A contract must be honored in each annual budget. A proactive approach was preferred over a reactive one. Pros and cons were revealed in each proposal.

The group discussed the possibility of Dixfield getting involved and agreed to have the Police Chiefs get together to look at a three town alternative. Dixfield reported that their Chief is due to retire soon and that their town wants to continue 24-7 police coverage. The Selectmen agreed to review a final report from Municipal Resources, Inc., and both proposals from the Sheriff and the Rumford and Mexico Police Chiefs and to schedule the next meeting for December 11, 2014 at 6:00 pm in the Calvin Lyons Hall, Mexico to further discuss the proposals.

#### 5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:27. p.m.

John E. Madigan, Jr.  
Town Manager

JEMJr/tp