

**Approved**  
**Candia Selectmen's Public Meeting**  
**Thursday, March 29, 2007**

**Attendance:** Chairman Fred Kelley, Vice-Chair Tom Giffen, Selectman James Brennan, and Selectman Joe Duarte. Also present Candia's Cable Contract Negotiator Ron Thomas. Selectman Lazott absent due to an unexpected illness.

**7:00 p.m.** Vice-Chair Tom Giffen opened the Public Meeting for the purpose of discussing the Town's Cable Contract with Bryan Christiansen Manager of Government & Community Relations for Comcast.

Selectman Giffen noted the Town had not heard the results from the Comcast survey. Selectman Giffen stated an ascertainment hearing was held in 2006 as part of the negotiation process. Selectman Giffen pointed out that the Town was not in a position to take immediate action on a public access channel because there is no funding for that purpose. Selectman Giffen thought the results of the survey may indicate an interest in Public access television or a survey. Selectman Giffen wondered if the Board could implement a Public Access channel part way into the contract. Bryan Christianson stated Comcast could design the contract so there would be some flexibility. Bryan Christianson cautioned about getting into an arrangement with volunteers for the long haul noting once the newest wears off they sometimes disappear. Bryan Christianson stated Comcast could put language into the contract that states the Town has the right to the PEG (Public Educational & Government) channel subject to good faith negotiations with the cable provider. Bryan Christianson stated that language would preserve the Town's right and keep it clean and simple as well. The Board was in favor of having the wording inserted within the contract for a future option should funding come available. Selectman Giffen thought it would be helpful to have pricing for a simple bulletin board channel. It was noted that newly elected Selectman Duarte was not present for part of the process and meetings. Selectman Giffen presented the transcribed minutes to Selectman Duarte for his review.

Bryan Christianson was aware that the Board was considering entering into a shorter term contract and wondered if the insertion of the wording for the PEG channel would affect how they felt about that. Selectman Giffen thought the Board would consider a slightly longer term contract if there was some flexibility written in it in regarding the PEG channel. Selectman Giffen expressed concerns over the lack of communication during the renewal process prior to his involvement and was considering doing the process over which would be more clearly defined in line with the statutory process. Bryan Christianson stated Comcast was following the statutory process. Bryan Christianson advised that time was tight (expires 6/13/07) but not impossible. Selectman Duarte requested a recap on the process to date. Selectman Giffen discussed that Comcast currently has an infrastructure in place in Candia. Selectman Giffen mentioned the Comcast fee which is paid by the subscriber, funneled to Comcast, returned to the Town and currently gets deposited in the general fund to help offset taxes. Selectman Giffen stated perhaps the Board may consider negotiating something in the contract in regards to

the Comcast fee in order to provide some type of PEG channel. Selectman Giffen thought funding would need to be requested in the form of a warrant article in regards to equipment need for the PEG channel and also thought the amount needed would be roughly between \$50,000.00 and \$100,000 (for video and audio equipment). Selectman Giffen stated the Board would need to see if the Town would vote to raise and appropriate funding for that specific purpose. Selectman Giffen said there would also be a need for volunteers (more than one) to operate the equipment or the Town would need funding to hire someone. Bryan Christianson stated the infrastructure cost for the initial wiring set up would be done by Comcast as part of the franchising and it would be on the subscriber's bill. Selectman Kelley wondered the costs associated with the total set up. It was noted that a Town vote on the matter had not been addressed. Bryan Christianson thought it would be in the Town's best interest to reserve the right. Bryan Christianson said he was present for a license to use the right away and currently there is a 3% franchise fee. Selectman Duarte wondered if the Town could have another provider come in and they were offered a better deal. Bryan Christianson stated the Town could request RFP's but there is not currently an over builder in New Hampshire. Ron Thomas stated we could not break the Comcast contract without just cause. Selectman Giffen mentioned other options available would be satellite television. Ron Thomas pointed out the process within the current contract that addresses over billing and also pointed out the importance of the Selectmen knowing their role in that process. Bryan Christianson stated there would be wording in the contract to cover Comcast in the event the Town awards a contract to an over builder. Ron Thomas pointed out a section on page 11 in regards to potential amendments and thought the Board should be very familiar with it. Selectman Duarte stated as new selectman he was unfamiliar and noted he wanted a copy of the current contract. Ron Thomas went on to point out several specific sections within the existing contract that the Board members would need to be very familiar with. After some further discussion on the existing contract and the negotiation process the Board thanked Negotiator Ron Thomas for his thoroughness at the meeting and also his knowledge on the current Contract.

Bryan Christianson expected the results from the Comcast survey around April 10, 2007 and stated he would then contact the Town to arrange bringing in the results. Selectman Giffen thought they would be able to incorporate the survey discussion into a regularly scheduled Public Meeting.

**8:05 p.m.** Selectman Giffen closed the Comcast Contract portion of the Public Meeting.

### **Other Business**

**The Board to receive an update from Tax Collector Sanders on her recruitment efforts for the vacant Deputy Tax Collector position:** The Board met with Deputy Tax Collector Sanders to receive an update on the vacant position. Tax Collector Sanders said she did contact the school to get the opening on the sign but mentioned a delay in getting the information on the sign. Tax Collector Sanders stated she had been in contact with the Local Government Center (LGC) and Secretary of State Office and both have said that the Deputy has to be a registered voter within the Town. Tax Collector Sanders

said all of the Departments have said as a common practice in New Hampshire, the Deputy merely needs to be qualified to step in but does not need to be the person doing the work and that a staff person can do the work. Tax Collector Sanders stated the information was backed up by the Attorney General's Office. Tax Collector Sanders mentioned she was faxed a copy of an email sent to Ellen Dube of the Secretary of the State's Office noting there is an arrangement in the Town of Hanover involving an appointed Deputy Town Clerk that is not a resident but is doing all of the work. Selectman Giffen requested copies of the mentioned documentation. Tax Collector Sanders said the LGC would be sending the Board a letter stating that the Deputy does need to be qualified but a staffer does not. Tax Collector Sanders noted she would be working closely with the individual serving as Deputy and would need to have confidence in that person. Tax Collector Sanders stated there was another applicant but noted she did not know the person and that was why she would prefer the other applicant. Tax Collector Sanders stated she was also comfortable with this person availability and willingness to do the job. Tax Collector Sanders mentioned that Kristina Ickes of Candia was high on her list "extremely qualified" but had not been available as a Deputy. Tax Collector Sanders stated she spoke with Kristina Ickes last night and barring any unforeseen issues with her full-time employment she is ready and willing to become Deputy in title and also ready and willing to step in if the Tax Collector becomes incapacitated. Selectman Brennan stated he was aware that her full-time job was demanding. Tax Collector Sanders agreed. Selectman Duarte said it was his feeling that the Tax Collector and the Board need to pursue find a person for the Deputy position that would be able to take over as Tax Collector position without the Board going through a 30-day period grace period. Selectman Duarte felt it would not be an easy task for the Board with everything else going on in the Town. Selectman Giffen reiterated that it was his feeling to pursue that first instead of taking what they currently have before them. Tax Collector Sanders said Kristina Ickes was willing to be that person. Selectman Giffen said she would hold the title and not do the work. Tax Collector Sanders said that is correct. Tax Collector Sanders said presumably the Staffer would train the Deputy in title if need be. Chairman Kelley agreed with Selectman Duarte and thought the Board really needed to have a Candia resident in place. Chairman Kelley stated he had reviewed the RSAs and also spoke with the LGC on the matter and they feel the Town should have a Candia resident to back up the Tax Collector. Tax Collector Sanders restated that Kristina Ickes is a resident. Chairman Kelley said he was surprised she was willing to take the title on with the demands of her current job. Selectman Giffen asked if there was any information on any candidates. Tax Collector Sanders mentioned another unsolicited resume she reviewed but favored her candidate because of her people skills. Tax Collector Sanders expressed concerns over the time table and the need for help. Selectman Giffen said to Tax Collector Sanders you are proposing to appoint Kristina Ickes as Deputy in title only and requesting to hire Joan Vigliotti as a Staffer to do the actual work. Selectman Giffen wondered if the Tax Collector's budget would handle two people at this point expressing concerns over a limited budget amount available. Tax Collector Sanders stated she would not offer more than \$10.00 per hour for anyone to start. Chairman Kelley stated he did not think the Board should make a decision that evening and noted he was still waiting to have questions answered from Legal Counsel. Chairman Kelley thought the Board would need Counsel's input on the proposal made by

Tax Collector Sanders (Resident who is would be willing to serve as Deputy in title only and would be willing to step up in the event the Tax Collector is incapacitated & in addition to that also hire a Staffer who would actually do the work.). Chairman Kelley did not want the Board or the Tax Collector to get into any trouble with the proposed arrangement. Selectman Brennan asked Tax Collector Sanders if the Board were to consider hiring Joan Vigliotti just to help out this time during the busy season and wondered if she would be willing to look for someone in Town. Tax Collector Sanders indicated that she had been looking without much luck. Chairman Kelley pointed out that the position had not been posted publicly as of yet. Tax Collector Sanders stated it was not normally publicly advertised and felt it would need to be someone that she knew and someone she had a good feeling for. Tax Collector Sanders said there would be people out there that she just would not ask. Selectman Brennan asked if Tax Collector Sanders would have a problem if the position were advertised. Tax Collector Sanders said she would have a problem with it, did not want to make it a cattle call and stated she would have to know the person. Tax Collector Sanders said she had been here a year and had been through two Deputies already. Selectman Brennan thought Tax Collector Sanders would sit in on the interview process. Selectman Giffen advised that the Tax Collector would actually hold the interview. Tax Collector Sanders thought by RSA she was responsible for finding the person and bringing that person to the Board. The Board agreed. Tax Collector Sanders informed that she found Joan Vigliotti perfect in every way with the exception that she is not a resident. After some further discussion Chairman Kelley reiterated the need to talk to Counsel on the proposed arrangement. Selectman Giffen stated the Board would be looking for a status update from Tax Collector Sanders as the information she mentioned comes available. Chairman Kelley stated he would report back to the Board once he receives input from Counsel and then the Board would get back to Tax Collector Sanders. Tax Collector Sanders thanked the Board for their time.

**8:33 p.m.** Chairman Kelley closed the meeting.

Minutes compiled by Secretary Dawn Chabot via cassette tapes.