

Board of Selectmen  
Town Office Annex  
March 4, 2013  
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: Mark Walter; John Blaschik, Emmett Lyman  
Also Present: C. Varricchio and L. Zemienieski

1. First Selectman Walter called the meeting to order at 10:06 am and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Bid Award—Heating Oil and Diesel: Mr. Walter explained that the fuel bids came in today and that whatever day we lock in our gallons the price would be based on that days Nymex. If we were to lock today we would be looking at approximately \$3.2015/gallon for fuel oil and \$3.2054/gallon for diesel at a fixed rate. It was noted that we currently are paying \$3.3919/gallon for fuel oil and \$3.4947/gallon for diesel. The board discussed the best options for the town.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to finalize prices with the bidder, East River Energy, for #2 heating oil and diesel fuel for the period of July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, and to authorize the First Selectman to enter into said agreement on behalf of the Town.

3. General Budget Review Workshop: Mr. Walter and Ms. Varricchio noted that they spent a lot of time reviewing the budget. They noted with the declining revenues, less state funding and poor economy they were trying to invent creative ways to manage the town. They both felt the shared services department would help. Ms. Varricchio noted that the budget book would be coming to the board in stages. She further noted that with the current pricing for fuel oil and diesel she would be adjusting the figures submitted and would be showing a substantial decrease in those expenses from what was anticipated.

Mr. Walter noted that Public Works was scheduled to discuss their budget at 10:45am so the board would begin reviewing other department budgets until Public Works arrived.

Assessor

The board noted that increases in this budget were due to contractual and 1.5% non-union salaries and postage.

Elections/Registrars

The board noted that increases in this budget were due to salaries. The hourly rate was increased from \$14.00/hour to \$16.00/hour. It was noted that there was a small decrease in the postage line.

Finance Office

The board noted that increase in this budget were due to contractual and 1.5% non-union salaries and conferences. Ms. Varricchio noted that there were two conferences that she needed to attend.

#### Land Use Office

Mr. Walter called the board's attention to the decrease in clerical salary line. He explained the digital scanning project for the Building Department and Land Use Office. He noted that with the merging and scanning of the records for these departments he felt that there would only be a need for one administrative assistant between the two departments. He also explained the request for clerical help from the Police Department and Park & Recreation Department. He thought that the town might be able to shift one of the Land Use/Building Department clerical positions to the Police/Park & Recreation Departments.

#### Old Middle School Operations

Mr. Walter noted that overall this budget had a decrease. The board did discuss the surveillance camera that is needed for that property.

#### Regional Probate Court

Mr. Walter noted that there was a \$361 increase in this budget. The board discussed where all the fees go and where the salaries came from.

#### Selectmen

The board noted that increases in this budget were due to contractual and 1.5% non-union salaries.

#### Tax Collector

Mr. Walter noted that Ms. Dill would be attending later in the meeting to discuss her request for a salary increase. He briefly reviewed the reason for the increase was to bring this department head position up to the rate received by the Town Clerk. He noted that the decision was also made not to replace the Assistant Tax Collector who retired and Ms. Dill was handling all the department duties with occasional help from the other clerical assistants who were cross-trained to cover the Tax Department.

#### Town Clerk

The board noted that overall this budget had a decrease.

#### Treasurer

The board noted the increase in this budget was due to the 1.5% non-union salary.

#### Fringe Benefits

Ms. Varricchio explained the increases in this budget. She noted that the budget includes the Affordable Care Act and explained the health insurance increases and MERF mandate.

#### Insurance

The board noted the increase to Workers Compensation. Ms. Varricchio reviewed the fact that the Town and Board of Education are now combined on the same policy and the percentage allocated to the Town for WC and LAP is 49% and the BOE portion is 51%. The increase to the Town budget will show a corresponding decrease to the BOE budget.

#### Legal Services

This budget shows an increase in the Open Space legal line which will cover the closing and legal costs for our two most recent purchases (Pages & Zeiller).

#### Technology and Records Management

This budget will be discussed at a later date.

#### Agriculture Commission

Portion of this budget were just received and it is not yet complete.

#### Board of Assessment Appeals

This budget has not changed from last year. The board discussed the revaluation hearings.

#### Board of Finance

The board noted that the increase to this budget was in the auditor line.

#### Conservation Commission

Ms. Varricchio asked that discussion on this budget be held until tomorrow. She noted that the commission put in some interesting requests for capital that she has asked for clarification on from the chairman.

#### Economic Development Commission

This group will be coming to discuss their budget Tuesday evening.

#### Historic District Commission

Ms. Varricchio noted that this is the second year in a row that this commission did not submit a budget. Mr. Walter noted that he reviewed the budget from last year and decreased the legal ad line.

#### Open Space Committee

It was noted that this budget had an overall reduction.

#### Zoning Board of Appeals

It was noted that this budget had an overall reduction.

Beth Lunt arrived at 10:40 to discuss the Public Works budget.

#### General Highways

The salary lines were discussed and it was explained that during the clerical contract negotiations it was determined that the clerical position salary was considerably lower than the other clerical

positions so it was being brought up to be in line with the other administrative assistant positions. It was also noted that in negotiations for the teamsters contract there was a give back on MERF and in return the town gave higher salaries.

Ms. Lunt noted that the tree maintenance line was increased due to the recent storms and the need for more trees to be removed. She further noted that the double lines on some streets needed to be done and explained that double lines work as a traffic calming measure as well. The board discussed the need for line painting.

Ms. Lunt also noted that the price for calcium chloride has gone up which accounted for the increase in that line. The board discussed the paving of O'Connell Road Extension.

#### Snow Removal

The board noted that the increase in this budget was due to contractual salaries.

#### Town Garage Maintenance

It was noted that this budget had an overall reduction. The board discussed the need for surveillance cameras. Ms. Lunt explained that she along with Park & Recreation and the police watched a demonstration on some cameras that were motion activated with a voice recorded message. The camera would digitally enhance license plates and they were also bullet proof and came with two dummy cameras.

#### Transfer Station

It was noted that the increase in salaries was contractual. Ms. Lunt explained the increase in the equipment maintenance line. She noted that the hopper was never designed to take the capacity of the commercial haulers. She added that no other town allows commercial haulers to dump at the transfer station. The board had a brief discussion regarding the use of the hopper by commercial haulers.

#### General Highways Equipment – Capital Plan

It was noted that capital for this budget consisted of the replacement of truck 13, body replacement of truck 10 and purchase of a tractor and flail mower. It was noted that the current mowing machine has massive breakdowns and is unreliable. Ms. Lunt noted that she would like to keep this older machine as a backup and purchase a new one.

#### General Highways Roads and Bridges – Capital Plan

Ms. Lunt explained that in the road program Boardman Road and W. F. Palmer Road were planned to be reclaimed and paved this year. Some of the other roads in town will be shimmed and overlaid.

Mr. Blaschik asked where this left us in our road repair schedule. Ms. Lunt explained that she was attempting to repair the most traveled roads first. She added that some of our older roads did not have the proper design base and she could not apply the current maintenance standards. She noted that shim and overlay hold up better on these roads. She further added that our roads were deteriorating faster than the repair schedule but to keep up with it would require a larger

budget. She has brought this to the attention of the Board of Finance over the last couple of years.

#### Transfer Station - Capital Plan

It was noted that capital for this budget consisted of the well replacement. She explained that the well had high iron and bacteria and that the iron could be treated but not the bacteria. In response to a question by the board Ms. Lunt noted that the well would service both the Transfer Station and the Dog Pound.

Ms. Lunt left at 11:55am.

#### Building Maintenance & Operations

It was noted that the biggest increase in this budget was due to an increase in heating oil. There were some additional funds requested for roof repair at the Millington School House.

#### Central Services

It was noted that the increases in this budget were due to supplemental wages, heating oil, and addition of copiers for the Fire Department/Emergency Management and East Haddam Free Public Library. It was further noted that the addition in the building maintenance line were for replacement/repair of the back stairs of the Town Office Building and “Welcome to East Haddam” type signage replacement throughout town.

Ms. Varricchio noted that the increase in dues was due to transferring the dues for the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments from the Land Use budget to the Central Services budget.

#### Animal Control

The board noted the increase in this budget was due to the 1.5% non-union salary.

#### Building Department

Mr. Walter called the board’s attention to the decrease in clerical salary line. He reviewed the digital scanning project for the Building Department and Land Use Office. He noted that with the merging and scanning of the records for these departments he felt that there would only be a need for one administrative assistant between the two departments. He also reviewed the request for clerical help from the Police Department and Park & Recreation Department. He thought that the town might be able to shift one of the Land Use/Building Department clerical positions to the Police/Park & Recreation Departments.

#### Emergency Management

Mr. Walter noted that they increased the stipend for the Emergency Management Director. He also explained that Colchester Emergency Communications (KX) will be putting out an RFP shortly. In these financial times they are finding that they are too small to survive on their own and are looking to be absorbed by another emergency communications group.

#### Tax Collector

Denise Dill arrived at 12:30pm. Mr. Walter explained that he adjusted the Tax Collector's salary to be equivalent to the Town Clerk's salary. It was noted that the Tax Collector no longer has an assistant and she is working more hours to staff the office. Ms. Dill did note that other clerical employees are cross-trained in her department and do help fill in when she is out of the office.

Ms. Dill left at 12:35pm.

4. Adjournment: There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Blaschik, to adjourn the meeting at 12:37 p.m.

Tape: None

Respectfully submitted,

Emmett Lyman, Secretary