

Board of Selectmen
Town Office Annex
February 14, 2015
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: Mark Walter; Emmett Lyman, Ernie Malavasi
Also Present: C. Varricchio; S. Wheeler and L. Zemienieski

1. First Selectman Walter called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Lyman, to approve the agenda as written.
Unanimous aye.

2. General Budget Review Workshop

A. General Government Budgets: The Selectmen discussed the Recreation Department's budget increase requests. Mr. Walter reviewed the history of the Director's salary increases and additional clerical support. Mr. Malavasi noted the increase in program use and Ms. Varricchio provided information on the revenue experience of the department. The Selectmen discussed the Commission's request for a salary increase for the Director and, if approved, what impact it would have on other department heads. Mr. Malavasi stated he supported some part of the increase. The Selectmen agreed to revisit the discussion later in the budget review process.

Ms. Varricchio stated that the Board of Finance would want to know what benefits the Town has realized from the additional hours previously added to the Recreation Department's budget.

- B. Public Safety Budgets: These budgets were previously discussed and the department heads are scheduled to make their presentations on February 17th.
- C. Health & Social Services Budgets: These budgets were previously discussed and the department heads are scheduled to make their presentations on February 17th.
- D. Culture & Recreation Budgets: This budget was previously discussed and the Selectmen agreed to continue their discussions of this budget on February 17th.
- E. Debt Service: This budget was discussed during the February 12th meeting.
- F. Interfund Transfers: Capital Projects and Reserves: The following Capital Projects/Reserves were discussed:

- The Town Clerk has requested funding for additional storage space. Mr. Walter noted the limited size of the current vault.
- The Conservation Commission has requested \$10,000.00 for property oversight.
- Land Use's request for funding a flyover system for the Town was again pushed out to the following year. The Selectmen discussed the potential for reserving over several years for this expense and Mr. Walter stated he would get more information on the project from Mr. Ventres.
- The Finance Department is requesting \$15,000.00 for additional Munis training.
- Mr. Walter noted several changes he made to the Recreation Department's Capital requests. There was a general discussion regarding the proposed disk golf course.

G. Other Budgets (9:00am-2:00pm as time permits): The following budgets were pre-reviewed in anticipation of the February 17th meeting:

- Animal Control: Ms. Varricchio recommended making the Animal Control account a Special Revenue Fund. Mr. Walter advised that the function is currently shared with East Hampton. He noted that the Animal Control van needs to be replaced and the Town will use the payments received from East Hampton to pay for a new multi-use pick-up truck to replace the van. He stated that East Hampton has initiated a discussion about sharing staff with East Haddam. Mr. Walter indicated that such an arrangement would be at no additional expense to East Haddam and would improve coverage for both towns.
- Emergency Management/911 Services: Mr. Walter pointed out that the KX contract is the largest component of this account.
- Fire Department: Mr. Walter advised that he had requested that the 2015-16 budget for this account be split to reflect career and volunteer expenses. He noted that additional funds were requested for training, repairs and maintenance. He stated that the Town has requested an OSHA consultant work with the Fire Department to identify/fix potential violations. He also presented an organization chart for the department and reviewed planned structural changes.

Ms. Varricchio noted the Fire Department is requesting funding for updated fire software but the expense may be covered by a grant. There was a general discussion concerning leasing versus purchasing the software. Ms. Varricchio agreed to provide a breakdown of the options for the Selectmen's consideration at the February 17th meeting.

The Selectmen discussed the Fire Marshal's projected hours for 2015-16.

- Police Officers: Mr. Walter stated that the Town has experienced a decrease in burglaries, larcenies and drug violations since the addition of a 2nd full time police officer. He reviewed the available part-time resources and stated that there is still a lack of resources at night and on the weekends. He advised that it continues to be his goal to add a third full-time police officer to address the night and weekend coverage. There was a general discussion about hiring an additional officer and it was noted that there is currently a good pool of candidates available. The Selectmen also discussed the potential for regionalizing this function with other neighboring towns.

The Selectmen discussed how the Town could fund the expense of an additional full-time officer and Ms. Varricchio agreed to provide details on the department's historical salary expense at the February 17th meeting.

- Senior Services: Mr. Walter advised that the large bus will need to be replaced soon and the Selectmen discussed options including chartering a large bus as needed rather than purchasing or leasing a new bus. Mr. Walter reported that repairs will have to be made to the Senior Center's patio in the spring due to damage resulting from frost heaving.
- Youth & Family Services: Ms. Varricchio advised that the agency erroneously neglected to budget for payroll taxes in the previous budget so there is a comparable increase in this year's budget. She also noted that the department's budget has increased by 49% over the past 9 years. The Selectmen discussed the fact that the state's contribution has not increased over the same period so the department would have had to make up the difference, however, they agreed that the director should be prepared to explain the significant increase in the department's budget over the past 9 years.

Mr. Malavasi requested the Finance Director provide an analysis of IT hardware purchases. Ms. Varricchio advised that the Board of Education's latest hardware purchases were paid for with a grant and that this year the Town is only projecting to replace two laptops and a server.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Malavasi, there was a general discussion about the Town's use of credit cards.

3. Adjournment: There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Walter, seconded by Mr. Malavasi, to adjourn the meeting at 12:02 p.m.

Taped

Respectfully submitted,

Emmett Lyman, Secretary