

Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Rooms 1 & 2
February 13, 2019
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: E. Lyman; S. Link; R. Smith

Also Present: D. Angersola; B. Auld; E. Blaschik; M. Callahan; R. Casner; G. Christopher; S. Daigle; V. Garofalo; C. Mansfield; J. Moreau; D. Shelberg; J. Spencer; R. Turner; T. Varriale; C. Varricchio; S. Wheeler; L. Zemienieski, and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Lyman called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. and the attendees said the pledge of allegiance.
2. 2019-2020 General Budget Review Workshop

A. Public Safety Budgets

1. Building Department & Capital Budget: Mr. Garofalo noted that the increase to Salary & Benefits is due to the fact that the Town has posted for a regular full-time Building Official, otherwise the expenses in the department's general budget are flat. He noted that revenue is projected to increase due to the recent change in building application fees. Ms. Varricchio stated that the Building Department's revenue is projected to increase approximately \$15,000.00 next year. In response to a question raised by Ms. Link, Mr. Garofalo advised that the department is expected to be revenue-neutral; however, in reality, most municipal building departments produce a small amount of net revenue.

It was noted that there is a capital request for a new vehicle for the department and, in response to a question from Ms. Link, Mr. Garofalo advised that he has been using his personal vehicle for inspection visits and the new Official will need an appropriate vehicle.

Mr. Turner distributed materials regarding the Town's pending facilities paving projects and the libraries' requests for HVAC upgrades. He advised that, in his opinion, it is not critical to do the paving/lighting projects at either of the libraries this year. He stated that the first priorities are to re-pave Fire Company #1 and seal the parking area and driveway of the Senior Center.

Mr. Turner reviewed the libraries' HVAC study done for the Town by BVH Integrated Services with the Selectmen. All agreed that, given the un-resolved future of the current library facilities, the Town should hold-off on the requested air conditioning upgrades. The Selectmen and Ms. Varricchio discussed allocating some of the libraries' reserves and the Rathbun Trust contribution for the boiler replacements.

Mr. Turner advised a concrete wall at the Rathbun library is beginning to crumble and should be repaired within the next two years; he estimated the cost for the repairs to be approximately \$9,000.00. He also stated that he expects to have an estimate for replacing the windows at the Rathbun by the end of the week.

2. Fire Department & Capital Budget: Fire Chief Auld reviewed several changes to the department's general budget. Deputy Fire Chief Daigle reviewed staffing schedules and noted that, although funding was allocated in their budget last year to hire another full-time employee, the plan had not been implemented and the department regularly operates with

only two staff members on duty. He stated that if those two staff members go out on a call, it leaves no one back at the fire house to respond to emergencies. Consequently, they have requested funding for one additional full-time employee.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Link, Mr. Daigle stated that the need for another full-time employee is a consequence of the fire department responding to an increased number of ambulance calls. Mr. Smith requested they submit 3-year statistics on their mutual aid calls and Ms. Varricchio asked Chief Auld and Mr. Daigle complete the questionnaire she had sent to them when they were putting together their budget request. Mr. Smith also requested a written report listing pending vehicle maintenance needs and estimated costs.

Chief Auld and Mr. Daigle responded to several questions from the Selectmen regarding their capital budget requests, including a \$100,000.00 increase to the cost of the replacement fire truck, \$6,000.00 for security cameras, and a roof replacement for one of the fire companies.

3. Fire Marshal: Fire Marshal Angersola responded to several questions from the Selectmen. He noted that the Books & Periodicals expense is for code books and has not been expended yet because the new books will be issued later this year. In response to a question from Ms. Link, Mr. Angersola explained how he records his time and his typical division of labor.
4. Emergency Management: The Selectmen reviewed the Emergency Management budget. Mr. Mansfield stated that the main increase to the department's general budget is for the anticipated increase in Valley Shore's fee. He noted that the actual increase is \$20,000.00; however, Valley Shore has agreed to phase it in over two years. He addressed the small increase to supplies and advised that the department has to replace expired items in the shelter kits and noted that all other budget lines remained flat.

The Selectmen and Mr. Mansfield discussed the construction of the Town's emergency radio system and he stated he expects it will be fully operational this summer.

A motion was made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Mr. Smith, to take a brief break at 5:52 p.m. Unanimous aye. The meeting reconvened at 6:02 p.m.

B. General Government Budgets

1. Economic Development Commission: In response to a question from Ms. Link, Mr. Casner advised that the Economic Development Commission is requesting \$12,000.00 in the purchased services budget line. He noted that they would use approximately \$5,000.00 to have the area around the old Town Office site surveyed for a waterfront public access path and a right of way to the Nathan Hale Schoolhouse site; \$3,000.00 for a study on increasing the distribution of the sewer system, and \$4,000.00 to develop shovel-ready sidewalk/beautification plans for the three business sections of the Town.

Mr. Casner responded to several questions from the Selectmen and confirmed that WPCA and/or the Planning and Zoning Commission have participated in discussions regarding the three listed projects.

2. Conservation Commission: Mr. Smith discussed the Conservation Commission's "oversight" line item with the other Selectmen and Ms. Varricchio and Mr. Smith agreed to meet to discuss the option of using a special revenue fund for this item.

- C. Public Works Budgets: This agenda item was not discussed at this meeting.
- D. Health & Social Services Budgets: This agenda item was not discussed at this meeting.
- E. Recreation & Leisure Budgets

- 1. Lakes Association: Ms. Varricchio advised that the Lakes Association's request to have its unexpended general budget funds role over into a reserve account at the end of each fiscal year has been forwarded to the Board of Finance's Policy Sub-Committee for consideration and she will inform them of the committee's decision. She noted that the Town's contribution to the Association is divided equally among its three members.

Ms. Varricchio stated that the Association's Capital budget is holding \$45,000.00 in reserves and noted that the Moodus Reservoir Group has requested their share be put toward the purchase of an eco-harvester. Mr. Varriale advised that their group has raised approximately \$35,000.00 toward the purchase of the machine and is also applying for grants. He confirmed that the Moodus Reservoir Group would be the owners of the eco-harvester equipment and would assume all operational, insurance and maintenance responsibility.

Mr. Christopher explained how the equipment works and responded to several questions from the Selectmen. In response to a question from Ms. Link, Mr. Shelberg stated that the eco-harvester would be for the exclusive use of the Moodus Reservoir Group.

- F. Capital Improvement Detail: Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.
- G. Debt Service: Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.
- H. Interfund Transfers: Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.
- I. Shared Services: Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.
- J. General Fund Revenue Detail: Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

- 3. Public Comment: The following public comments were made:

- Mr. J. Moreau thanked the Selectmen for considering his comments from the previous meeting. He stated that he is in agreement with the Fire Chief's staffing proposal but noted there could be scheduling conflicts with the part-timers. He suggested there could be alternative ways to schedule three people on duty rather than hiring an additional full-time person. He said he supports regular maintenance of the fire trucks but did not understand the need to install a video security system. Mr. Moreau also stated that the boiler replacement was one of the items the Town citizens voted to approve in the Fire Department renovations referendum and he expressed his frustration that it had not been done.
- Mr. Callahan said that, as a taxpayer, he was bothered to hear about uncooperative municipal employees. He said that the money the Town is paying for wages and benefits for such employees could be better spent on improving services and amenities for its taxpayers.

There was a general discussion regarding union contracts, state mandated MERF contributions, and the need for annual employee reviews.

4. Adjournment: There being no additional regular business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Lyman, seconded by Ms. Link, to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Link, Secretary