

Board of Selectmen  
Municipal Office Complex  
Meeting Rooms 1/2  
February 19, 2020  
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: R. Smith; T. Govert; C. Quinn

Also Present: E. Blaschik; W. Brady; G. Daigle; L. D'Aquila; T. Delventhal; R. Dill; A. Lord; M. Olzacki; Marc Piscioti; B. Reas; R. Turner; C. Varricchio; J. Ventres; L. Zemienieski, and other members of the public

1. Call to Order

First Selectman Smith called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 3:11 p.m.

2. 2020-2021 General Budget Review Workshop

A. Public Safety Budgets

1. Regional Animal Control: Mr. M. Olzacki reviewed this budget and he noted that the number of calls for the Animal Control Officer has increased. Mr. Olzacki stated that the overall budget had increased by 3%. Ms. Varricchio noted that the East Hampton payment to the Town has also increased 3% and reviewed other revenue received by the department.

Ms. Varricchio advised that \$6,000.00 is reserved each year for a new vehicle and that \$22,448.00 was expended this fiscal year for the new Animal Control Officer's vehicle. Mr. Olzacki stated that the old vehicle had been repurposed to the Facilities Department. Ms. Varricchio and Mr. Olzacki responded to questions from the Board.

Ms. Varricchio noted that the Animal Control capital budget is self-funding.

B. Board of Education Capital/Shared Services Budgets

1. Board of Education Capital: Mr. B. Reas reviewed the BOE capital plan and noted that the BOE has tried to project its needs looking forward ten years. He provided an overview of several sections of the capital requests, including school libraries, classrooms, gyms, and fields. He discussed the annual maintenance/upgrades to the sports fields and also noted that gym refurbishments had been postponed in previous fiscal years but suggested these projects should be kept on the capital list as reoccurring expenses.

Mr. Reas discussed capital requests for the elementary school and advised that \$5M had already been invested in updates to the physical plant and noted that the proposed envelope project will complete the work. He reviewed the capital request of \$2.5M for HVAC upgrades and several other capital requests. In response to a question from Ms. Govert, Mr. Reas and the Board discussed state reimbursement for school construction projects. The also discussed potential savings from the envelope project (new windows and doors) and the proposed air-conditioning upgrades. Mr. Reas responded to several questions from the Board and agreed that the capital request to replace the stage curtain at the elementary school could be pushed out.

Mr. Reas advised that the middle school and high school were built to accommodate air conditioning and recommended the Town begin reserving for installing it in both buildings. He also noted that the Middle School HVAC controls are out-of-date and should be replaced. There was a general discussion about the need for air conditioning in the schools and whether there would be any cost-savings to group several HVAC projects.

Mr. Reas reviewed capital requests for middle school projects, including installing irrigation in the sports fields, air conditioning in the gym/auditorium, refurbishments to the outdoor basketball court and hoops, scheduled carpet replacement, and reserving to implement Phases II and III of the playground equipment on the middle school grounds. He responded to several questions from the Board.

Mr. Reas reported that the project to repair the high school roof came in significantly under budget, at a savings of approximately \$800,000.00. He reviewed the capital request for an athletics complex at the high school which includes a new track, field improvements, and new restrooms. He reiterated capital requests for air conditioning and replacement HVAC controls at the high school and reviewed the requests for irrigation of the sports fields, replacement of the boiler and underground fuel tank; improvements to the softball field and reserving for a phone system for all three schools. In response to a question from Ms. Govert, Ms. Varricchio clarified how reserves are impacted by state reimbursement of Board of Education projects. Mr. Reas responded to several questions from the Board.

Mr. Reas reviewed several systemwide capital requests, including vehicle replacements, a request to expand the special needs graduate transition program, reserving for replacement of cafeteria equipment and wireless network equipment. Ms. Varricchio clarified how the Board of Education and Town split some of the cost of IT equipment via the Shared Services budget.

## 2. Shared Services

Ms. Varricchio explained how the Shared Services budget was set up. She reviewed several changes to the Town's portion of the Shared Services budget, including the increase in the Technical Services and several other budget lines. Mr. Reas spoke to the BOE portion of the Shared Services budget and noted that, while the cost to maintain an in-house IT staff is significant, it would be much more expensive to hire a private tech services contractor and the Town and the BOE would most likely not get the same level of service. He advised that the BOE Shared Services expenses do show up in the per pupil cost calculated by the state.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Govert, Ms. Varricchio provided clarification regarding the Shared Services Maintenance Fund budget and stated that it helps stabilize the budget from unanticipated maintenance and repairs.

## C. General Government Budgets

1. Historic District Commission: Ms. Varricchio stated that she had not received a 2020-2021 budget request from the Commission so she had not made any changes from the last fiscal year's budget. Mr. W. Brady stated the Commission had voted to request an increase in their budget to pay for additional clerical support to bring their records up to date and build a cross-searchable database of Historic District properties, applications, and/or Commission records. There was a general discussion regarding the proposed database and other work done by the Historic District Commission.

2. Open Space Committee: Ms. Varricchio noted that a donation for open space of a bit over \$9,000 was received from Connecticare through the Neighborhood Assistance Act Program and when received will be added to the Open Space reserve fund. Mr. J. Ventres noted that the Open Space Committee's budget covers the cost of appraisals, signage, etc. Mr. Brady provided an overview of the responsibilities of the Open Space Committee.

The Board agreed to take a brief break at 4:55 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 5:05 p.m.

3. Zoning Board of Appeals: It was noted that there was no change in the Zoning Board of Appeals budget. Mr. G. Daigle and Mr. J. Ventres responded to several questions from the Board. The charges for the advertising was discussed and Mr. Ventres agree to provide Ms. Varricchio with updated information.
4. Land Use Office (P&Z, IWWC, WPCA): Mr. J. Ventres provided an overview of the Land Use Offices responsibilities and budget history. The only increase to this budget is the 2.5% placeholder on the Salaries line. Ms. Varricchio noted a \$2,000.00 increase in the Land Use department's revenue.

Ms. Varricchio pointed out that the expense for updating the Plan of Conservation & Development is included in the capital budget. The Board and Mr. Ventres discussed whether there is a need to extend the sewer lines up to the Four Corners area.

The Board discussed the status of the existing sewer system and the potential to mitigate the allocation of the cost of repairs to existing users. Ms. Varricchio stated she would look into a better way to forecast and reserve for WPCA maintenance work.

#### D. Public Safety Budgets

1. Ambulance Association: Ms. L D'Aquila distributed information related to the discussion on the Ambulance Association budget. Ms. Varricchio reviewed the annual program to grow reserves for the purchase of a new Ambulance. In response to a question from Mr. Smith., Ms. D'Aquila projected the research to the purchase a new ambulance will begin early in the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Ms. D'Aquila noted that the Association does not anticipate returning any funds to the Town at the end of this fiscal year. There was a general discussion regarding revenues from mutual aid calls, staffing, and the department's reporting process. Ms. D'Aquila and Ms. Woodward responded to several questions from the Board. There was a discussion about whether the reserve plan for the purchase of a new ambulance is appropriately funded.

- E. Culture & Recreation Budgets: There was no additional discussion of the Culture & Recreation Budgets.
- F. Health & Social Services Budgets: This agenda item was postponed.
- G. Debt Service: This agenda item was postponed.
- H. Interfund Transfers: Ms. Varricchio stated that she and Mr. Smith have meetings scheduled to discuss Interfund Transfers. There was a general discussion regarding several capital requests, bonding for capital requests and state reimbursement of BOE projects.

I. General Fund Revenue Detail: This agenda item was postponed.

Ms. Zemienieski reviewed the schedule of presentations for the next meeting. The Board discussed the budget process.

3. Public Comment: In response to a question from Mr. E. Blaschik, Mr. Smith confirmed that the BOE capital requests are not part of the BOE general budget, they are included in the Town's capital budget.
4. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,  
Theresa Govert, Secretary