

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2009, 3:00 p.m.

Town Hall Conference Room

Chairman Ronald Cormier called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.; also present were Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman David Morse, Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin, and Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace.

Operating Budget Discussion

Chairman Cormier discussed with the Board how the budget is deceptive this year because it is being compared to what was appropriated in 2009, not with what the Board of Selectmen actually approved for a budget. Selectman Morse pointed out that there are three items that stand out as having large increases; health insurance, curbside recycling and Pleasant Valley debt services. He noted that health insurance and Pleasant Valley debt; the Board has no control over. It was noted that curbside recycling will be an individual warrant article and isn't actually part of the operating budget. The Board agreed that they are presenting a responsible budget and will stand behind the 4.3% increase, which is driven primarily by the health insurance increase and Pleasant Valley debt.

Town Administrator Beaudin pointed out that another significant increase is in the tipping fees for solid waste. The new rate from the co-op has shown an increase to that line item of \$60,000. Selectman Morse noted that he's not sure that he is in complete support of presenting the curbside recycling piece within the budget. His concern is that it is a very large expense for the service and other programs such as pay as you throw may be a better option for reducing tipping fees. Selectman Cormier stated that with the amount of people that have asked for recycling and the numbers growing each year, he feels it is necessary to put it on a warrant article and let the residents decide if there is enough support for the program. Town Administrator Beaudin noted that a recycling program would reduce the tonnage at the co-op and perhaps to reduce the expense of the recycling program she could request a quote from Waste Management for bi-weekly collection of recyclables instead of the proposed weekly collection. The Board agreed that was a good idea and may cut the expense in half. Following a brief discussion the Board agreed that they would put curbside recycling on a warrant article if the bi-weekly collection came in a reasonable amount.

Selectman Morse suggested that because there are no areas to reduce the operational budget that perhaps the Board needs to look at ways to increase revenue. There was discussion

of reducing tax credit levels; as well as disposal of the ambulance fund. The Board discussed and agreed that there likely wouldn't be support for the credit reduction however there may be support for ambulance fund revenues becoming part of the general fund. They discussed that a warrant article would be needed to dispose of that account and then a capital reserve account would be needed to fund Fire Department vehicle purchases similar to the other department's vehicles.

The Board agreed that Town Administrator Beaudin should include in the PowerPoint presentation to the Budget committee; that in response to the increase and cuts being impossible the Board is recommending the discontinuation of the ambulance fund with a capital account being set up for future equipment purchases for the Fire Department.

Capital Request Discussion

The Board discussed that because last year the voters chose not to support the majority of capital requests, again this year's request look higher than what was appropriated however; are less than what the Board actually approved. The Board agreed to support what is being proposed at the time for capital requests but discussed how the better inform the voters. They discussed a post card mailing for deliberative session information as well as newspaper ads and informational presentation boards at the polls.

Water & Sewer Discussion

The Board discussed the changes for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office relative to adding hours to support part-time help for water & sewer billing and posting. Town Administrator Beaudin noted that the Financial Administration budget was changed to reflect the increase of \$10,156 in extra hire and the benefits expense (FICA, Medicare) was added to the water and sewer budgets. Additionally they discussed Jim Fortin's request to offer additional hours to the individual working in the sewer department at this time. The Board agreed that although they support additional hours for this employee they cannot implement it at this time. They agreed that 20 hours could be paid to him for his sewer work and if Jim has plowing and other tasks he can train him to do for public works he can offer him an additional 12 hours for a total of 32. They cannot authorize him to work full-time hours at this time.

The Board discussed and agreed that at this time it is hard to evaluate the need for additional help in these departments because of the new staff and changes that have taken place. They agreed that with a year under their belt, these areas can be better evaluated next year, in determining what the needs at that time are and if additional staffing is needed as well.

Non-Public Session

Chairman Cormier called the non-public session to order at 4:10 p.m. in accordance with 91-A:3 II (c). Those present and voting were Ronald Cormier, Jon Pike and David Morse. Also present were Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin, and Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace.

Chairman Cormier closed the non-public session at 4:30 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting will be Monday, November 16, 2009 at 5:00 p.m., at the Corner Meeting House.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Ronald Cormier, Chairman

Jon Pike, Vice Chairman

David Morse