

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney, Vermont
Monday, January 4, 2016
7:00 PM
REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES
APPROVED 1/11/2016

Select Board Members Present: N. John Arrison
Daniel Boyer
Lynn Esty
David Fuller (arrived late)

Colin Butler sitting in for Jim Mullen

Others Present:

Howard Beach	Michael Barrup	Darrin Spaulding	Michael Todd
Edith Stillson	Mychael Spaulding	Kelly Murphy	
Wes Hazeltine	Brenda Richardson	Amy Beth Main	

1. Call to Order

Mr. Arrison called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

2. Comments from Select Board and Citizens on topics not on the agenda

Select Board

Mr. Arrison announced that the new Town Manager is Ed Morris. Mr. Morris will be moving to Town in February.

Citizens

Ms. Murphy wants the Town to direct the owners of 14 Ascutney Place to have soil testing on the perimeter of the property, as she is concerned about oil dripping from the oil trucks that are being parked there now possibly contaminating the adjacent down slope wetlands. She was directed to bring her request to the zoning board.

3. Review minutes from previous meetings –

Motion: To adopt the minutes of the December 9th special meeting.

Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Mrs. Esty

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion: To adopt the minutes of the December 21st regular meeting.

Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Mrs. Esty

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Vote: Unanimous in favor

4. Discuss meeting minutes of 12/09/2015

Mr. Arrison said he had consulted with the Secretary of State's office regarding the discrepancy of the warning for the December 9th special meeting and the minutes of that meeting. Crawford said that it did not appear to present an open meeting law issue.

(Mr. Fuller joined the meeting.)

5. Fire Commission Monthly Report

Mrs. Esty announced that Mrs. Bearse had resigned as recoding secretary of the Fire Commission and asked for anyone interested in taking the position to contact her.

Mrs. Esty read her monthly report, copies of which the Board had received via email prior to the meeting. Most of the report focused on dry hydrants and the Fire Chiefs' frustration with the length of time it takes to get them repaired.

Mr. Arrison read Mr. Mullen's response to Mrs. Esty's report.

Mr. Arrison said that a discussion of dry hydrants was not on the agenda and couldn't be discussed this evening.

Mrs. Esty's report also stated that the Commission had voted to use \$4500 of the equipment reserve fund to buy turnout gear for the West Weathersfield Fire Department. Mr. Butler said based on the Mrs. Esty's report, \$4500 had been removed from the reserve equipment budget. Mrs. Esty clarified the intent of the Commission's motion and asked that the \$4500 be restored.

Ms. Murphy cautioned the Commission and the Select Board regarding the exchange of emails between members outside of meetings – that a violation of the Open Meeting Law could easily occur.

6. Place article on 2016 Town Meeting Warning to disband Fire Commission for one year?

There was much discussion among the Board members regarding this matter. It was suggested that perhaps the Commission simply take a prolonged break from meeting rather than completely disband the Commission. No definitive action was taken.

7. Review Warning for 2016 Town Meeting

Mrs. Esty asked about the name "Fire Apparatus Acquisition Reserve Fund" as it appears in Article 11. She said that the funds for the Engine 3 replacement are proposed

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to come from the Fire Equipment Motorized Reserve Fund and asked if these two funds are in fact the same. Mr. Butler said he would check into it.

8. Review Fund Balances in General Fund, Highway Fund, and Solid Waste Fund

According to Mr. Mullen's written report to the Board, \$60,157 is needed (and has been placed in the budget) to restore the Highway Fund Balance to zero. This amount is based on the anticipated fund balance that was to be used to reduce 2015-2016 taxes, the final cost of the replacement well, the heating system for the highway garage, and the actual fund balance that was available. The Board was concerned about the impact of such a large amount on the voters and spent time discussing possible ways of "softening the blow" including the ideas of amortizing the expense or using highway maintenance reserve funds to pay for the heating system. Mr. Butler will follow up with Mr. Mullen.

Mr. Mullen reported that the FY17 budget calls for \$30,601 from the Fund Balance to reduce taxes, leaving a Fund Balance of \$89,957. \$89,957 represents a Fund Balance of 7% of expenses, which falls within the recommended range of 5%-10%. There was discussion regarding the philosophy of retaining Fund Balances. No definitive action was taken.

Mr. Mullen reported that the Solid Waste Fund ended the FY15 with a Fund Balance of \$13,709, which represents 5% of expenses.

9. Review historic rate of Delinquent Taxes owed

Mr. Mullen provided the Board with a table showing the delinquent tax data back to 2005. The table shows that the amount of delinquent taxes owed have declined substantially since 2010, with an average percentage of total taxable parcels delinquent averaging roughly 6.6% in the past three years. The Board requested additional information on the delinquent tax process be provided at the next meeting.

10. FY2017 Budget Review (with Budget Committee)

A. Review draft FY2017 Municipal Tax Rate Computation

According to Mr. Mullen's written report, little or no change in the Grand List is anticipated. A penny of the municipal tax rate will raise \$29,145.

B. Review draft FY2017 General Fund Budget

According to Mr. Mullen's written report, there was no COLA, so employees will not be getting any raises in FY17. Employees will begin paying \$15 a week toward their health insurance starting 1/1/2016. Mr. Todd suggested that the Board consider requiring 5% of the health insurance premium rather than a flat amount as it is more equitable among the employees and it allows for changes in the premiums over time. \$882,718 is to be raised by taxes. Funds to be transferred to the fire equipment reserve fund were reduced from \$7000 to \$2500.

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C. Review draft FY2017 Highway Fund Budget

Highlights of the budget include \$872,438 to be raised by taxes; highway fund balance funds will not be available to reduce taxes (see earlier discussion); and the budget for diesel fuel was reduced to reflect the lower cost of diesel fuel.

D. Review draft FY2017 Solid Waste Budget

This was not discussed.

E. Review Capital Paving Plan (with phasing of Amsden School Road reconstruction)

Mr. Mullen provided an estimate of \$44,473 for a “Phase 1 – no pavement experiment” for 650 ft of Amsden School Road. An additional \$28,195 would be needed to pave that amount of the road.

F. Review draft FY17 Capital Replacement Plan and Long Term Debt Schedule

This was not discussed.

G. Review draft FY17 Reserve Funds Budget

Again, the amount to be transferred to the fire equipment reserve fund was reduced from \$7000 to \$2500. No other changes were reported or discussed.

11. Require all vehicles entering transfer station display a sticker (beginning 1/27/16)?

Motion: Beginning Saturday, 1/27/2016, only vehicles displaying a sticker may enter through the gates of the Weathersfield Transfer Station.

Made by: Mr. Fuller **Second:** Mr. Boyer

Discussion on the motion: Mrs. Esty asked who would police the gates. Mr. Arrison said that it would be up to the current two operators.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

12. Rewrite of Large Gathering Permit Ordinance (Final Reading)

This item was tabled to the January 18th meeting.

13. Update on Project to Access Town Forest

This item not discussed. There was a written update from Mr. Mullen in the Board's packet.

14. Award funds from Transfer Station Bottle/Can Redemption Program – Round 4

No applications were received for funds.

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15. Discuss 2016's Annual Town Meeting to be held on Saturday

Mrs. Esty said the schedule of events is: School meeting 10-12:30; lunch 12:30 – 1:30; town meeting 1:30 – 4:00. Questions can be directed to moderator Peter Cole or Lynn Esty.

16. Appointments

Motion: To appoint Harry Temple to finish out a four-year term that expires in 2018 on the Conservation Commission.

Made by: Mr. Fuller **Second:** Mrs. Esty

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

17. Approve Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for January 4, 2016 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$43,285.22
	Payroll	\$12,310.09
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$25,150.22
	Payroll	\$8,959.99
Solid Waste Management Fund	Operating Expenses	\$3,984.74
	Payroll	\$1,116.85
Library	Operating Expenses	\$118.69
Grants	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
Agency Monies	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
Reserves		\$744.58
Grand Totals	Payroll	\$22,386.93
	Operating Expenses	\$73,283.45

Made by: Mrs. Esty **Second:** Mr. Boyer

Discussion on the motion: Mrs. Esty asked about the cell phone costs in the General Fund. Mr. Arrison questioned negative amounts for Blue Cross in both General and Highway. Mr. Colin said he would find out.

Vote: Unanimous in favor

18. Future Meeting Agenda Items

19. Adjourn

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Motion: To adjourn the meeting

Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Mr. Fuller

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

deForest Bearse

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

N. John Arrison, Chairperson

Daniel E. Boyer, Vice-Chairperson

David T. Fuller, Selector

C. Peter Cole, Selector

Lynn Esty, Selector