

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD

Select Board
&
Budget Committee
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney, Vermont
Monday, January 11, 2016
7:00 PM
SPECIAL MEETING

MINUTES
APPROVED 1/18/2016

Select Board Members Present: N. John Arrison
Daniel Boyer
C. Peter Cole (via telephone)
Lynn Esty
David Fuller

Budget Committee Members Present: Brenda Richardson
Amy Beth Main
Greg Adamovich
Michael Todd (arrived at 7:50 PM)

Jim Mullen, Town Manager

Others Present:

Bonnie DuPrey	Westley Hazeltine	Josh Dauphin	Polly Bergeron
Wanda Gropler	Edith Stillson	Tracey Dauphin	Ernie Shand
Charles Horton	Darrin Spaulding	Kelly Murphy	Colin Butler
Beverly Howe-Fluette			

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

There were no comments from the Board.

Citizens

Mt. Horton asked if employees were getting pay raises this year. Mr. Arrison said no.

**3. Review minutes from previous meetings –
Additions/corrections/deletions:**

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD

a. Mr. Cole was not present.

b. Mr. Fuller joined the meeting between agenda items #4 and #5.

Motion: To accept the minutes of the January 4th meeting as corrected.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

4. Review current status of Delinquent Tax Collection

Mr. Fuller presented his opinion that delinquent tax money should be counted as revenue. He stated that there is a budgeted surplus of \$90,000 in the general fund, \$71764 to be collected through the upcoming tax sale on January 26th, and 92 parcels that owe delinquent taxes that must be paid. He claimed that by not using this money as revenue, the result is a 20% excess over what the general fund needs.

There was much discussion about Mr. Fuller's presentation. Mr. Arrison said that the auditors agree with the manner in which the Town has handled delinquent tax funds. Mr. Butler said that delinquent taxes cannot be counted as revenue. Mr. Mullen said that the Town has reached an equilibrium between the delinquent taxes that get paid and taxes that become delinquent each year – they offset each other, so there is no “surplus” money being received.

There was also much confusion about figures that have been presented for the Board and the Budget Committee to work with. No resolution was reached.

5. Receive FY2017 Budget Recommendations from Budget Committee

As per the Budget Committee meeting minutes of January 5, 2016, a copy of which was given to the Board, the Committee had planned to recommend that the current budget be accepted without any additional changes. They also were recommending that the fund balance be eliminated in the Highway fund; a 10% fund balance be maintained for the General fund; and that employees should be required to contribute 5% (later changed to 7%) of their insurance premium cost starting 1/1/2017.

However, on January 7th, Mr. Mullen submitted important recommendations to both the Board and the Budget Committee. Due to changes made in the budget following the January 4th Select Board meeting and the January 5th Budget Committee meeting and correcting a couple of errors that were discovered, the tax increase rose to 9.1%. Mr. Mullen proposed reducing the increase to 7.4% by eliminating contributions to the Fire Apparatus Reserve Fund and the Police Cruiser Reserve Fund and reducing the contributions to the Library and Highway Equipment Reserve Funds.

There was much discussion about the proposal and what the final budget would be. It was made clear that the increase was not due to an increase in spending on the part of

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD

the Town departments, but rather the lack of surplus funds. Ultimately, when polled by the Chair, Mr. Boyer, Mr. Arrison, Mrs. Esty and Mr. Cole agreed to move forward with the budget as it stands (with the 9.1% increase) leaving the reserve funds intact. Mr. Fuller was not in favor. Then Mr. Mullen offered to alter the budget so that a portion of the reserve funds would remain intact and the balance would be put to the voters as separate articles. The majority of the Board members agreed. It will be discussed further at the next meeting on Thursday, January 14th.

6. FY2017 Budget Review (with Budget Committee)

The following topics were touched on in the discussion above. They were not discussed individually.

A. Review draft FY2017 Municipal Tax Rate Computation

B. Review draft FY2017 General Fund Budget

C. Review draft FY2017 Highway Fund Budget

D. Review draft FY2017 Solid Waste Budget

E. Review draft FY2017 Capital Replacement Plan and Long Term Debt Schedule

F. Review draft FY2017 Reserve Funds Budget

7. Review draft Warning for 2016 Town Meeting

The warning was reviewed but not finalized because the budget was not finalized.

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

Ms. Murphy said that the School meeting could be shortened to 10:00 – 11:30. It was agreed to warn the Town meeting for noon.

Mrs. Esty said there is still no one to provide lunch.

9. Future Meeting Agenda Items

10. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 PM.

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD

Respectfully submitted,
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WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

N. John Arrison, Chairperson

Daniel E. Boyer, Vice-Chairperson

David T. Fuller, Selector

C. Peter Cole, Selector

Lynn Esty, Selector