

Minutes of the Special Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, November 20, 2013 at
5:00 PM

Members present: Stephen Flanders, Chair; Christopher Ashley; Ed Childs; Linda Cook; Keith Moran; Neil Fulton, Town Manager; Nancy Kramer, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were 10 people in the audience.

Also participating: Phil Dechert, Andy Hodgdon, Jill Kearney, Steve Leinoff, Doug Robinson, Roberta Robinson, Bonnie Munday.

Flanders opened the meeting at 5:02 pm.

1. Public Comments. None.

2. All Departments Budget Presentations (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Fulton provided the Selectboard with handouts of the PowerPoint presentation that included a summary of material covered at the November 13, 2013 meeting. The major budget changes in the budget are: \$18,494 in the Police budget for wages, benefits and MDTs; Emergency Management budget increase of \$49,951 for debt and communications system; an increase of \$10,000 in Workers' Compensation due to rate increase, mainly in the Fire Department; and an increase of \$12,500 in the Sidewalk and Generator reserve funds. The total for these increases is \$90,945. However, the total increase in the overall budget is \$79,401.

Town Administration – The biggest change in this budget was a reduction in the amount budgeted for Facilities Studies. Wages and benefits are 78% of this budget. Questions were asked about the Miscellaneous and Office Supplies line items and the Treasurer's Stipend.

Town Clerk/Board of Civil Authority (BCA) Abatement/Statutory Meetings – These budgets represent 4% of the overall Town expenditure budget. Wages and benefits are 90% of the Town Clerk's budget. \$14,500 has been allocated for records restoration in accordance with the 10-year plan. BCA has been decreased because the Town-wide reappraisal is complete. Statutory Meetings has been increased due to the election cycle. Questions were asked about dental insurance, recording fee revenue and salary increases.

Finance Department – This budget represents 3% of the total Town budget. Part of Bynum's time, 15 hours, will be charged to the Assessor Department budget in FY15. Cook asked for clarification of accounting for Bynum's time spent on Highway Department work. Fulton replied that Bynum's time spent on Highway is not being tracked and is included in the Finance Department budget. Fulton is proposing moving the Independent Audit line item to Finance and the Town Report line item to Town Administration. Questions were asked regarding the difference between the Department Request numbers and the Proposed Budget numbers, how much of Bynum's time is reserved for Public Works and where his time spent on this is budgeted.

Debt Service – Shown on this are: the Tracy Hall Bond, the grader lease-purchase and the communications bond and lease-purchase.

Town Appropriation – Consists of \$1,000 budgeted for Norwich Special Events.

Tax Expenditures/Unemployment & Worker's Compensation/Support Group Expenditures/Ambulance Expenditures – Increases are shown for TRORC, VLCT and Worker's Compensation. Data has not been received yet from GUVSWD. We also do not have the FY15 ambulance service cost from

Hanover. Questions were asked about the debt for the Solid Waste District bond.

Assessor Department – This budget represents 2.3% of the total Town budget. A \$10,000 increase has been budgeted for the Contract Assessor.

Planning/DRB Department – This budget represents 3% of the total Town budget. Wages are 91% of this budget. Questions were asked about the Town Plan, Planning Services and Historic Preservation Commission line items.

Recreation Department – This budget represents 5% of the total Town budget. Revenue produced by this Department is 86% of its expenditures. Recreation special events were reviewed. Charts were also provided showing historical trends of revenues versus expenditures for the Department. Questions were asked about the Recreation Assistant line item change and having a second Circus Camp.

Police Station/Police Department – This represents 13% of the total Town budget. The Department currently has 5 full-time employees and 3 part-time. Wages are 80% of the Police Department budget. A graph was provided showing a slight upward trend in expenditures. A chart showing projected police vehicles expenditures was also provided. If the budget were increased by 5%, Robinson would add a permanent part-time officer, increase the contribution to the Special Equipment reserve fund and convert Police Station computers to MDCs. Items discussed were: MDCs, the permanent part-time officer, overtime and License Plate Readers. The Selectboard asked that numbers be provided for the addition of a permanent part-time officer (32 hours) or full-time as a follow-up item.

Fire/FAST Station/Fire/FAST Department – This accounts for 7% of the total Town budget. Wages are 46% of this budget. The Department has 1 thirty hour per week employee and 40 part-time employees. Charts were provided showing Fire Department expenditures and apparatus expenditures. If the budget were increased by 5%, Leinoff would like to add paying for the second monthly fire drill, begin purchasing higher quality boots and purchase two new portable radios with alpha numeric displays. Items discussed were: recruitment, retention, increased training costs, boots, call in hours, what was driving the spike in expenditures for the Department and grant availability. After discussion, the Selectboard asked that a third paid drill, leather boots and two portable radios be added to the follow-up items for November 26th.

Emergency Management – This budget represents 1.8% of the total Town budget. The major increases are for the communications system upgrade and the creation of a Generator Reserve Fund. Fulton gave a brief update on the tower.

Public Works Department – This Department represents 45% of the total Town budget. Wages are 34% of the Public Works budget. The Tracy Hall budget has been moved to this Department. \$10,000 for maintenance and repairs of Town-owned sidewalks has been added to the Sidewalk Reserve Fund. The Highway Division increase over FY14 is 1.8%. The Buildings & Grounds Division decreased 3.9%. The Solid Waste Division decreased 8.8%. Tracy Hall increased 12.1%. Graphs were provided showing historical Public Works expenditures, Solid Waste historical revenues and expenditures, municipal Solid Waste and recycling volumes and recycling as a percent of total.

Solid Waste – There has been a 26% decline in the total annual volume of municipal solid waste and recycling since FY08. The Town is in the process of developing a five-year plan for the Transfer Station. The Town is working with local communities on a regional effort to meet the requirements for Act 148.

Buildings & Grounds – There were no substantive changes in this budget.

A chart showing projected highway equipment expenditures was provided. A chart showing highway bridges projected expenditures if the Town receives a \$175,000 structures grant from AOT was reviewed. There was also a slide showing Town-owned sidewalks, their conditions and cost to replace.

Items provided if the Public Works budget was increased were: increase dust control, increase crack sealing, add 3 LED crossing signs, increase sidewalks, increase pavement markings and setup a guardrail reserve fund.

Tracy Hall – There was an increase in repairs and maintenance. A Tracy Hall maintenance plan is being worked on.

Items discussed: Main Street paving project, the paving plan, pavement markings on Main Street and 10A, special projects, tree cutting, crack sealing, asphalt products and amounts remaining at year end from budgeted amounts.

Additional centerline striping costs were added to the issues to hold list.

3. Labor Relations Agreement and Personnel - Town Manager (Executive Session may be Required). Pursuant to Title 1 VSA § 313(a)(1)(3), Ashley **moved** (2nd Childs) to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the labor relations agreement and to invite the Town Manager to attend that Session and for the purpose of the annual performance review of the Town Manager. **Motion passed**. The Selectboard moved into Executive Session at 7:31 pm.

At 7:45 pm the Selectboard moved into public session. Childs **moved** (2nd Ashley) to authorize the Town Manager to sign Amendment Number One to the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of Norwich, Vermont and the New England Police Benevolent Association for the period from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014. **Motion passed**

Ashley **moved** (2nd Cook) to adjourn. **Motion passed**. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on January 22, 2014.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Stephen N. Flanders
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – November 26, 2013 at 6:00 PM

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