

TOWN OF ASHBURNHAM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN – SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY – APRIL 24, 2013 – 5:00 p.m.
LOWER LEVEL MEETING ROOM – TOWN HALL

PRESENT – Board of Selectmen: Ed Vitone, Chair, Leo Janssens, Clerk, and Duncan Phyfe, Member.
Also in attendance: Doug Briggs, Town Administrator and Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator.

At 6:30 p.m. Ed Vitone called the meeting to order and stated that he wanted to modify the agenda to include a discussion on the School Committee’s request to retain the \$40,000 of Chapter 70 money. Doug Briggs noted that he wanted to include a discussion on the ATM warrant and the PILOT. ***Duncan Phyfe motioned to approve the agenda as amended and was seconded by Leo Janssens. Motion carried.***

Mr. Vitone began the discussion by stating that the Town voted an additional \$40,885 for the School District budget with the stipulation that any additional Chapter 70 funds received would be returned to the Town. He noted that at the School Committee meeting last night, they asked to keep these funds to go to their E&D account. He noted that this money would roll over into free cash for the Town. Leo Janssens stated that they should stick to the deal and give the money back to the Town. Duncan Phyfe agreed. Mr. Vitone stated once again that the school should honor the deal. ***Leo Janssens motioned to advise the School Committee that they Town will be keeping the Chapter 70 funds as agreed and was seconded by Duncan Phyfe. Motion carried.***

Mr. Vitone excused himself at this time noting that it would be counter-productive if he stayed as he did not agree with the other two members on some issues being discussed.

Doug Briggs brought up the issue with the Treasurer’s budget for FY14 and the proposed reduction of \$20,000 that would go towards the school. Mr. Vitone stated that this was funded by tax levy and that the Annual Town Meeting was for approving this while the Special Town Meeting would be for things that we’re not sure of or for unexpected expenses.

At this time, Mr. Briggs started the review of the ATM Warrant articles. He noted that Articles 1 thru 8 were the consent calendar. He stated that Article 9 was the FY14 Budget and noted that he wanted to address this. He stated that the Warrant had to be posted no later than Friday April 26th but that the Advisory Board wasn’t meeting until Monday, April 29th. He stated that he would be adding a column to the budget in Article 9 “BOS Recommend” which would make it easier for the voters. He also noted that on Article 9 the Selectmen Recommendation was “no”.

He touched on Article 10 stating that the Selectmen’s recommendation should read TBD.

Doug Briggs then discussed the additional funding of \$110,210 for the School as well as the funds for the Fire Department for options 3 and 5, stating that the funds were already in the budget. He stated that he met with Chief Barrett, Chief Zbikowski and Superintendent Nims to discuss cuts. He noted that he also spoke with Bill Johnson, Advisory Board Chair about reducing the Reserve Fund amount by \$25,000 which shouldn’t be needed. He noted that it was not a good move to take funds from the Treasurer’s budget as in reality it wouldn’t be a savings. Mr. Briggs stated that under the IT line item, the \$10,500 for the fingerprint scanner was needed this year so they would either go with a Reserve Fund transfer or transfer within the departments. It was also noted that the \$7,200 for the Police radios would be purchased out of their FY13 budget. He noted that Option 3 was put in the Fire Department budget and that after the meeting held on Saturday, April 22nd, the school budget is now \$6,432,648 which is \$110,210 more than last year. He added that as of this meeting, he did not have the new assessment or certified numbers from the School District.

Mr. Briggs noted that he would return the Snow & Ice Budget back to \$180,000 and that the remaining numbers were the same with the total BOS recommend to be \$13,321,064 and the Advisory Board recommend at \$13,293,555. He added that the School will need another approximately \$230,000 for the override, Article 10.

Mr. Briggs explained that he had set aside \$50,000 for Snow & Ice in the budget and that he could use \$15,000 from this fund for the Treasurer's budget so that we didn't have to take it from his budget. ***Leo Janssens made the motion to take the \$15,000 from the special Snow & Ice line item and move it to the Treasurer's budget per the Town Administrator's suggestion and was seconded by Duncan Phyfe. Motion carried.***

There was some discussion on Article 15 the AWRSD Capital item noting that the BOS recommendation should read "no". Both Mr. Janssens and Mr. Phyfe stated that it should be left to the voters to decide. Mr. Briggs noted that with the previous years of School Capital items, they haven't spent the money in the articles until now so their need may not be great at this time. ***Duncan Phyfe motioned to vote "no" on the BOS recommendation for Article 15 and was seconded by Mr. Janssens. Motion carried.***

There was a short review and discussion of the other articles. On Article 22, the PILOT agreement with tenK Energy, it was noted by Mr. Briggs that this was basically the same as the past agreement with Investar, the same property which is being purchased by tenK Energy. Some discussion followed on how the solar PILOT works. ***Duncan Phyfe motioned to approve Article 22 as amended and was seconded by Leo Janssens. Motion carried.***

Mr. Briggs noted Article 24 which was a citizens petition regarding corporations. Mr. Janssens stated that in his opinion he did not want to recommend as it was not the Board of Selectmen place. ***Mr. Janssens motioned for no action on Article 24 and was seconded by Mr. Phyfe. Motion carried.***

There was a short discussion on Article 25 which would put funds in the Capital Fund if it was voted "no" on the VMS demolition and mediation.

It was also noted by Mr. Briggs that on Article 20, the retiree health insurance, that it was up to the citizens to make this motion and to explain.

At 7:30 p.m. Duncan Phyfe made the motion to adjourn and was seconded by Leo Janssens. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte, Assistant to the Town Administrator