

M. Gomes and W. Hopkinson attended the Teacher Contract Arbitration. They presented on the financial situation of the Town of Beacon Falls. She noted that they presented their information and then left. W. Hopkinson brought up the ECS or lack thereof and fact that we have not received TAR money. The 1% swing in population from Prospect to Beacon Falls was brought up and the grand list only went up 1.5%.

S. Cable wanted everyone to realize that the make-up of this community is very different from what it was. The demand of the work is growing. The "over 55" population have a lot of needs which are very different from the 30 - 40 age population. Additionally, a lot of the town is still operating on a part-time basis.

S. Cable noted that it is time for the town to grow. She noted that the bottom line is that if you have good Management people in place such as M. Gomes in the Financial Department who takes some of the work load out of the First Selectmen's office (she also noted that payroll should not be in her office either but they are working on that), the Police Department has good management and they are bringing in lots of grant money and they are also not in the union. This is why she would like to hire a Public Works Director. She noted that Joe Rodorigo made a lot of constructive statements. She noted that we have a situation where people are afraid to get sued and they are afraid to make decisions so they run to the engineers and consultants which cost us a lot of money. She noted that if we have the right management in Public Works it will end up saving us a lot of money and getting us more for our money.

S. Cable noted that she would like to start advertising for the position. It has to be posted for 10 days in house before it goes to the papers. She noted that she would have brought this up at the February meeting but the February Board of Finance meeting was cancelled. She would like to know how the Board of Finance feels about this and mentioned that they should start going in this direction.

W. Hopkinson asked if there is any impact to this current budget regarding this position. S. Cable talked about trying to use some monies from line item transfers in this budget. The time line for the hiring of this person would be maybe 2 months after advertising and interviews. G. Smith wanted to know what they expected the salary for this individual to be. It was noted that their research found this salary should be in the range of \$59k to \$62k. G. Smith noted that with benefits this position would cost the town somewhere around 75K each year. S. Cable noted that surrounding towns have Public Works Directors then Crew Foremen. She noted that it in some ways it is not the inadequacy of the personnel on hand. G. Smith reiterated the phrase "in some ways" and S. Cable confirmed that phrase "in some ways". S. Cable noted that the town has done a whole lot of sending to school and training and doing things and she mentioned that these people are doing the best they can in their job but the job descriptions and demands are changing. Does that mean fire them if they can't do the job? She noted the union would not allow for that. She asked the Board of Finance to think about what she is presenting. She noted that we have people in positions now that require some

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engineering back-round or higher education than high school and currently we do not have people in those positions.

G. Smith asked S. Cable if she thinks she will be able to get a qualified engineer for that amount of money. S. Cable noted that she's looking for an engineer to do just the simple things and that she has already had people approach her. G. Smith asked how much of the Engineering budget will be reduced, he asked if all of it would go away. S. Cable noted that she would never promise that. D. Sorrentino said that you would not be able to do that. He noted that it's a plus having a firm to do what is required for us because of applications. He noted that even if we hired our own Town Engineer, he would not have the versatility that a firm would have to review the applications.

S. Cable wanted to point out that she wants a working Foreman. She noted that he cannot go out and work with the crew like he is suppose to because of paperwork and things have to be done. The job description has always been for a working Foreman. She also noted that a Public Work Director would be another avenue to finding money and research things to save money on equipment and trying to find grants.

W. Hopkinson noted that the 2009/2010 fiscal budget allowed for \$75,000 for engineering and she pointed out that we have already used most of that money.. S. Cable wanted to point out that all of the fees for Engineering have gone up in engineering and planning and zoning and from this we get some revenue. S. Cable asked that in the audit, how money comes in for engineering needs to be more clear.

S. Cable also noted that while she respects everyone's opinion, this is a Management decision and it was their decision to do this. W. Hopkinson asked if this was a unanimous decision. S. Cable said "yes". M. Krenesky said that they talked about it but does not remember actually voting on it. S. Cable mentioned that they had a Special Meeting for this vote.

G. Smith noted, with all due respect, while this may be a Management decision the Board of Finance still needs to approve the money that goes into it. M. Krenesky noted that he thinks that his argument at the time was that they weren't sure as to where the money was coming from. S. Cable said that was not M. Krenesky's argument.

S. Cable said that now we are coming to the Board of Finance for approval of funds. G. Smith responded that to him, it sounded like the Board of Selectmen has already made this decision and the Board of Finance could take it or leave it. S. Cable noted that she did not mean it that way. G. Smith pointed out that he still thinks this is a pretty big commitment to make to hire someone at, including benefits, 75K a year; that is the amount that was budgeted for Engineering. He again asked what would happen to the engineering budget with this new hire. D. Sorrentino responded that it should be less. R. Doiron noted that it should be at least half of what it is now or this position just does not make sense. D. Sorrentino pointed out that a lot of times now in order for the street to do something they have to refer to someone who has this kind of knowledge and if we

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hire the right person who is able to deal with this, the Town's engineering cost should go down but he can't say how much.

W. Hopkinson pointed out that not knowing how much this would affect the engineering budget is where the Board of Finance has a problem. For instance, what if the budget is cut only 5K and then the town is stuck with the remaining 70K to raise. G. Smith noted that in this scenario, the new hire would already be here. B. Ploss mentioned that after hearing about this new position, some people have approached him to discuss it. A lot of what he is hearing from the people is that they think that the town will get someone who is close to retirement or already employed somewhere and will basically jump on a golden parachute (he reiterated that this is what he is hearing from the general public), the person will come here and work for 10 years and then have a pension on top of it.

G. Smith noted that maybe who we are currently using for Engineering consultants are not the right people. Maybe in the current market we should be speaking to other firms. S. Cable noted that they have already gone that route. G. Smith asked if we are still using Navis and Young and S. Cable noted that every time they talked about changing Navis and Young, all the other Commissioners came to the Board of Selectmen and said that they feel Navis and Young are one of the best and all liked to work with them. M. Krenesky noted that members of the engineering firm solicited all the boards to get letters of positive support. G. Smith asked if the Board of Selectmen has spoke to any other Engineering firms. S. Cable noted that they have not gone out to bid for engineering but they have talked to different engineers through the years for different things and she noted that you're not going to get a better bang for your dollar. G. Smith said that in this market/economy, everything should be explored. He compared this to changing auditors. He noted with the new auditors we seem to be getting better service for less.

S. Cable noted that this does not need to be belabored because there's no money and she basically knew what was going to happen at this meeting but she wants to point out that what really needs to be looked at is the engineering, take a look at what we have in our departments and management and what we want to put in place in order to grow with the community. This to her is more important than looking at whether we are saving money here or there. S. Cable said we could go out to bid for everybody and do everything and 10 to 1, because we have done it for years and may save 10K or 20K but once everything is in place we end up in the same route. We have to focus on the fact that we need different people in the different departments ready to work in management, not in a union, ready to go out and find money and cost savings and not keep asking for things that they don't have any ideas on how to help fund.

G. Smith noted that his apprehension is to committing to something that will be long term. We can always hire someone down the road but if we hire someone now and it doesn't work, getting rid of him will be the problem. D. Sorrentino asked "what if this is a contractual position"? G. Smith said that since we don't know what is going to happen to the engineering line item of 75K, (we know it will be impacted but we don't know if it will go up or down with the new hire) he suggested that maybe we raise the amount in the engineering budget and maybe engage the engineering services a bit differently. He

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suggested maybe we ask the engineering firm to have a representative be more involved and if it costs us an extra 20K to get more out of their services then at that point if it doesn't work, then we can cut them off, then we are not committed to anything. He suggested maybe some negotiating with Navis and Young and informing them that we are looking to hire someone. Maybe they can come up with a comprehensive plan and maybe spend a little more time with us. He feels this is a better option than committing to a permanent position that might not work. G. Smith noted that he is opposed to making a long term commitment that may double the budget line item, especially this quickly. R. Doiron noted that he feels the same way as G. Smith. They noted that it's too quick without other options being explored (he noted that he is not saying that the Board of Selectmen has not explored other options). S. Cable mentioned to G. Smith that while he was on the Board of Selectmen he experienced some of these problems. G. Smith agreed that he did experience some of this and he does understand and he knows they did try to go down different roads. S. Cable noted that she agrees with what G. Smith is saying but would like him to carefully understand that to get rid of someone and get someone on the road they would have to be someone who is not in the union because Management and the union do not work. G. Smith said that he is not opposed to that.

W. Hopkinson noted that from what she is hearing, and she noted that she could be wrong and she's not sure if these questions can even be answered here, but there seems to be some personnel issues that need to be addresses. S. Cable responded that there are personnel issues and they have been addressed but you cannot easily fire these people. W. Hopkinson continued and said that she sees part of the problem relating to when you have personnel issues and the personnel report directly to a Selectman who is supposedly a part-time position, the personnel issues are not as easily dealt with as if you had a full time Director to solve these problems. She noted that she assumes this is one of the reasons they are seeking this position. W. Hopkinson noted with that said, if you are then taking a Foreman and saying he is going to be doing more active duty instead of pushing paperwork, (an additional worker on the line) do you then not reduce the hours or re-allocate those resources because you now have another person? S. Cable explained that the contract has different personnel listed. They have a Public Works Foreman and a couple of years ago requested an Assistant Foreman. S. Cable noted that she was able to negotiate that position down to a crew leader to make it a little different for less pay. We would have to open up the contract but right now he's not working, he's doing just paperwork. W. Hopkinson asked what is stated in the union contract. S. Cable said that the contract has this position listed as a working Foreman; he is also supposed to pick up a shovel. M. Krenesky responded that he should be picking up a shovel because if he is not, then he would like to know why we just spent \$157,000 on a truck that he is the only one driving. S. Cable noted that he does plow the roads.

G. Smith noted that he is looking at this strictly as dollars and cents and having sat on the other side, he understands that the Board of Selectmen have a whole other issue to deal with. G. Smith said that he believes the Board of Selectmen have to deal with that issue before they can even think about hiring someone else. G. Smith agrees with W. Hopkinson and that she made a very good point; there is only so much the First Selectman can do in a part-time position with full time personnel directly reporting to

her. He noted that anyone who is not doing their job needs to be called to task, union or no union. S. Cable said that they are not saying totally that this person is not doing their job is why we want another person but she is saying that they feel they can get more out of the whole team by having somebody who can give more individual direction and move us forward. G. Smith noted he is done speaking on this subject and feels that he made his point. S. Cable just wanted to bring this issue to the Board of Finance as something the Board of Selectmen are pursuing. S. Cable said that the Board of Selectmen still feels that this is still a need and are obviously not making their case strong enough. She pointed out that the two other Selectmen who continually agreed to this are not fighting for this. G. Smith asked where we go from here and S. Cable said they will have to look at what they are doing. D. Sorrentino said that they can still post and take applications and then make a decision. He noted that if it is not going to be funded they will still be able to at least get a feeling for what is out there. W. Hopkinson spoke on behalf of the Board of Finance and absolutely asks that the Board of Selectman do not do this on a permanent basis only to find out that the benefits are not quite what we thought they were going to be. W. Hopkinson stated that she is in agreement with G. Smith. M. Krenesky noted that he thinks it would be totally unfair to post something that we don't even know if we are going to get funds for. The Board of Finance agreed.

B. Ploss asked what will happen if the Board of Selectmen continue to investigate this hire. Does the Board of Finance request that the BOS go back to them prior to making a final decision? B. Ploss said that it sounded like according to S. Cable that the BOS could go ahead and make this decision on their own without approval from the BOF. It was noted that they will still need the funds. B. Ploss suggested that the Board of Finance might consider a quick motion so that before the BOS actually do anything, it is presented to the Board of Finance regarding the financial ramifications and funding. G. Smith pointed out that the Board of Selectman were ready to post this position so he assumes that they have already completed the due diligence they were planning on doing. S. Cable noted that they still feel there is a need for this and thought they could take some money from different line items until the new budget. M. Krenesky pointed out that this position is not yet reflected in the proposed FY 2010/2011 budget.

W. Hopkinson wanted to point out to both Boards that she sat next to J. Rodorigo during a Principals Breakfast and while she was sitting with him, he received no less than 4 text messages or emails in regards to questions or things that related to Public Works. She is only going to say that they were related to an employee in the area of public works. She noted that we currently have someone who is a volunteer who is actually probably filling part of that position. S. Cable noted that volunteering is not supported like it used to be. W. Hopkinson is only pointing out that something should be done. D. Sorrentino pointed out that volunteers are doing a lot of work that the Supervisor of the Street Department should be doing. They lack the ability to do projects. If something comes up that they are not sure about, they pick up the phone and call the engineer (he noted that it's not that they are not supposed to call an engineer) but he wanted to point out that if they had someone in the position that could analyze it and have the knowledge to say we need to raise the catch basin, it would save money. Right now, a call is made, they talk to the engineer, they go down there, maybe 3 or 4 hours has passed deciding on this. Now they

go back, do a drawing; we are spending that kind of money. D. Sorrentino noted that right now the Street Department is costing everyone who is sitting in this room \$1400 a day. He noted that he does not think the town is getting \$1400 a day out of them. This is one of the reasons why we have to get someone in that department to straighten it out and make it function.

G. Smith said they need to get a better idea of what's going to happen to the current engineering budget. Maybe Navis and Young should be contacted with the scenario D. Sorrentino just used and see what they could do for us. Maybe we should give Navis and Young the option of how they want to work for us or we may replace them with someone who is going to be on staff. This option would open them up for use by other departments - an on-staff consultant. W. Hopkinson thought this could be an option the Board of Selectman should investigate.

W. Hopkinson noted that she certainly does not want to get involved in the personnel management area of the town but there is a skill set that is required by the town that is not being met by the current Foreman. One concern she has is that we currently have a potential liability where mistakes can or already are being made, whether we hire or contract someone.

G. Smith again noted that he thinks this new hire is purely a financial issue. D. Sorrentino noted that G. Smith is familiar with the current situation and G. Smith agreed that he is familiar with the situation. While he doesn't want to say more regarding the situation he does think that if we were a little less nice and a bit more aggressive the situation would be taken care of.

Audit

M. Gomes reviewed page 8 of the audit. (Included in this filing)

Transfers of Delinquent Property Tax Accounts to Suspense Tax Books

Independent Review Procedures - Town Clerk's Office (reviewed earlier).

Purchasing

General Ledger Software (discussion regarding faulty software took place and W. Hopkinson asked M. Gomes to keep the Board posted on the status of the software issue)

Accounting Procedures Manual

CORRESPONDENCE

W. Hopkinson received a letter from Meyers and Company noting that they would like to do our audit.

W. Hopkinson received a request from S. Cable that everyone contact the First Selectman's office before contacting Navis and Young

Adjournment

G. Smith motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 P.M. **R. Doiron** 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

W. Hopkinson adjourned the meeting at 10:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren Classey
Clerk for the Board of Finance

