

Board of Selectmen
Meeting, Tuesday, April 16, 2013

Present: Selectmen – Mark Gilmore, Carolyn Shores Ness, Elizabeth Clarke
Town Administrator

Minutes: none reviewed

Public Comments: none

Selectmen's Comments/Announcements: none

Board of Health Comments/ Announcements: none

Appearance before the Board:

Interim Town Administrator: Present – Wendy Foxmyn

The Board held an initial discussion with Ms. Foxmyn to discuss her interest and availability in serving as interim administrator during the search to fill the Town Administrator position created by the retirement of Mr. Kubiak. She has filled such a role in Northfield and Longmeadow and is currently available to guide the Town with the search which generally takes 3-5 months.

Ms. Foxmyn had a number of questions for the Board about their expectations of her: Would the interim position be full or part-time; how much overlap time would there be; how would she be paid. Ms. Ness was ready to make a motion to hire Ms. Foxmyn, but the other board members wished to delay action in favor of further discussion.

Information about technical assistance available through a DOR audit to look at management or other needs of the town was part of the discussion. There was the thought that in anticipation of other planned retirements this might be the right time for such a study. **Ms. Clarke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gilmore, to request a DOR management audit. After further discussion the vote was in favor.**

Discussion/Decision Items:

Annual Warrant: The warrant before the Board has been reviewed by both the Moderator and Counsel. Mr. Kubiak said if everything is funded there will be a balance of \$533,000 in free cash. This does not include money for an Animal Control Officer. There was discussion about the Building Commissioner/ Health Agent position, held by the same individual. An increase in that item as the workload has increased due to big building projects at the private schools. **A motion was made by Ms. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Ness, and voted to sign the warrant.**

Animal Control Officer: This matter will be revisited in September; for the time being \$9,000 has been included in the FY'14 budget.

DEMS fee write-off request: The information needed was not available.

Oxford Property RFP: Mr. Kubiak presented a map of the property available for sale /development. He will present it to the Public Works Facility Committee at its next meeting for confirmation. There are approximately 12.5 acres available. He is working on a Request for Proposals. Mr. Gilmore said several years ago Stop & Shop had been interested in the site.

FY'14 budget: As the Board went through the proposed budget; Mr. Kubiak provided answers to numerous questions. With regard to questions about wages, he pointed out that some salaries

changed as job descriptions were revised to fit the actual work performed. In at least one case the job actually performed by one individual on his staff is quite different from that shown in the description of the position.

Meeting with Finance Committee: The Finance Committee (FC), already meeting in another room joined the Board. To a question about making the transfer station self-sustaining, Ms. Clarke commented that fees might be raised so that some services would pay for themselves. Questions were asked about what “special events” in the Police budget might be. Thoughts about limiting the Town’s portion to a 3% increase in the Frontier budget were pondered. There was discussion about the ambulance service as it is currently and how it may change.

Mr. Kubiak reminded that he has to have the warrant posted soon. He noted that the ambulance article has no number it, pending a decision to either fund the service as it is currently configured or in anticipation of regionalization. This is the third year in a row that the Finance Committee’s recommended budget will appear as a separate document. He called this a painful budget.

When looking for places to cut someone suggested looking to see where the money is: Police Dept., Schools, transfer station, etc. Three places to look for possible trimming are: General Hwy salaries, the Ambulance revolving fund, and the Frontier request– the Deerfield share (limit it to 3% increase).

FC would like justification for increases in wages (increase in responsibilities, promotion/ rank, etc.). Mr. Gilmore recommended that no promotions be authorized. He said the process had not been properly vetted. He felt that several promotions involved not just a step increase, but also a grade jump that was promised without having been cleared through the personnel Board and the BOS. “Here we are telling the schools to back it down and we’re giving promotions.”

At this point the FC left and the BOS resumed discussion of Mr. Gilmore’s point that there should be no funding for promotions in the FY’14 budget when presented to the Town next week. He **made a motion, seconded by Ms. Ness, and unanimously voted, that promotions be frozen at the present level and that they be evaluated over the next three month period for consideration at a special town meeting in September.** Mr. Kubiak asked for clarification of the motion. His understanding is that no funding for promotions is included in this FY’14 budget; individuals can go to the Personnel Board to have promotions preapproved in anticipation of consideration in September at a Special Town Meeting, contingent upon availability of funds.

Mr. Kubiak asked the Board its pleasure on the Ambulance Service; will it support funding at the Paramedic level or hold it at the current level? The FC is going to recommend the funding at the current level. The sentiment of the BOS is that this is a critical service. **A motion was made by Ms. Clarke, seconded by Mr. Gilmore, and unanimously voted, that the Board recommend the Ambulance Service be funded at the Paramedic level.**

After a final review of the town meeting items already discussed and the Board’s position on them, a motion to adjourn was made.

Respectfully submitted,
Priscilla Phelps