



TOWN OF DEERFIELD

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting - February 18, 2015

A regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was convened on February 18, 2015, at the Town Offices, 8 Conway Street, South Deerfield, MA.

PRESENT: Carolyn Shores Ness (Chair), David Wolfram, Mark Gilmore.

Also Present: Kayce Warren, Town Administrator.

Meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM.

PAUL OLSZEWSKI – ECONOMIC PLAN UPDATE

Paul Olszewski, Chair of the Deerfield Economic Development and Investment Corporation, presented information to the Board in relation to a proposed article to update the Economic Development Plan.

DEDIC has put approved an aggressive schedule to develop, review and revise the plan, and the board's efforts should culminate in presentation of a Warrant Article.

Mr. Olszewski stated that the intent of the update is to support and revitalize the park, and to update the regulations regarding it that may support future use and development.

The economic development plan may include regulations related to commercial development in the Deerfield Industrial Park. The Board expressed its support of the work that DEDIC is doing, and looks forward to future reports.

VOTE TO DEFICIT SPEND WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE (SNOW & ICE)

Currently, the Highway Department has incurred an overage of about \$16,000 over its approved budget of \$83,000. The Interim Highway Superintendent has requested permission to deficit spend in order to maintain

There was some discussion about whether the state has applied for Federal assistance in relation to the storm. There was also discussion about the severity of the weather events, and whether Western Massachusetts would qualify for State or Federal Assistance.

It was MOVED by Gilmore, SECONDED by Wolfram

To authorize deficit spending for Winter Snow / Ice Maintenance

VOTED: 3,0,0.

MOSQUITO DISTRICT

Ms. Ness spoke about the potential for Deerfield to participate in the regional 'Mosquito District', which would help to support mosquito abatement efforts, discussed the history of the program, the efforts made to enable the program, and the value to Deerfield by supporting the program.

There was concern about committing money to a program that might cost Deerfield money, particularly in light of potential state funding cuts.

Also discussed: appointment of a 'commissioner' to represent the town at the planning meetings for the program. The "Town of Deerfield's Board of Health Agent".

It was MOVED by __, SECONDED by __

To support of the Deerfield Board of Health's efforts in support of a regional Mosquito Control District.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

The minutes of February 11 were reviewed.

It was MOVED by Wolfram, SECONDED by Gilmore

To accept the minutes from February 11, 2015, as recorded.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS

Ms. Ness described her attendance at a HUD meeting related to natural disasters. She reported on a potential funding source for the proposed Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades.

Mr. Gilmore spoke about the temperature changes, and the amount of salt on the roads, which creates the potential for ice; viewers were advised to use caution on the road.

Ms. Ness suggested taking extra care to avoid the flu, including plenty of liquids, and eating right.

DATE FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

It was MOVED by Wolfram, SECONDED by Gilmore,

That the Annual Town Meeting be set on April 27, 2015 at 7 PM, at Frontier Regional School Auditorium, and continued to April 29, 2015, at 7 PM, if necessary.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

There was some discussion in relation to the timing of the

OPENING OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT

It was MOVED by Gilmore, SECONDED by Wolfram

To Open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant on February 18, 2015, with the intent to close the Annual Town Meeting Warrant on or before March 18, 2015.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

SEWER CONNECTION RATES

There was discussion about the information provided in relation to the sewer connection rates. No recommendation was forwarded, but the Highway Superintendent should be able to bring a recommendation to the BOS at the next meeting on March 4.

There was some discussion about the example rates presented, and a request for more and/or clearer information.

SECOND READING: EXPEDITED PERMITTING APPLICATION

The Board reviewed a second draft of Expedited Permitting Application.

Ms. Warren discussed the research completed in reviewing other towns' EPD processes, including applications, fee structure, and other materials.

Ms. Ness suggested that, as part of the Expedited Permitting District process, input should be solicited from the various boards and committees. Ms. Warren stated that is planned to be part of the process.

There was some discussion about the fee structure, and the total overall cost of fees.

Gilmore: I want to make sure that this document doesn't limit the town, or restrict this or other boards' input in regard to a given project.

Ms. Warren reinforced the importance of the application process, the need for input from other committees as part of that process, and the intent to be as inclusive in the application and permitting process as possible.

It was MOVED by Wolfram, SECONDED by Gilmore that

The Board of Selectmen adopt the EPD Application Packet and Fee Schedule as presented.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

There was some discussion of the Capital Request from the Frontier Regional School District Long Range Planning Committee.

Concern about the bulk of the fiscal burden being placed on Deerfield. Mr. Gilmore spoke in favor of funding the request, stating that it is in the town's long-term benefit to support the efforts of the Committee.

Wolfram: Is an outside consultant necessary in order to build a long-term capital plan?

Warren: The School Superintendent believes it is, in order to explore and compile a plan in a dispassionate and impartial way.

Gilmore: In most cases, it is difficult to get a balanced look.

Wolfram: I understand, but there should be a way to do this work without the expense. Regardless of the plan, there will be difficulty in 'selling' the plan. I'm not arguing the benefits of long-range planning – it's proven its worth in other cases.

There was some discussion about the 'independence' of the independent consultant. The board expressed confidence in the ability of the Long Range Planning Committee to choose a suitable consultant.

The board agreed to support the long-term capital plan capital request, and to pursue funding the request through an article at Town Meeting.

REVIEW OF BUDGETS

The board considered various budgets; the Town Administrator gave a brief presentation.

Some discussion on the SCEMS budget, particularly, the town's share of the assessment, and how that number will change in the future. There was also discussion about the revenue and reimbursement, as applies to SCEMS, and how those revenues are reported to the town.

Gilmore: The "Structure" of the SCEMS was supposed to allow for the town to 'bill back' certain expenses (grant administration, etc.)

Warren: The CIC grant was intended to provide a means to establish a method of capturing those costs.

Gilmore: However, the town has done a year worth of work without reimbursement.

Warren: Yes, but the grant has not been updated, or closed.

Wolfram: There was supposed to be a 10% reimbursement to the town from the original \$166,000 outlay.

Warren: That money still exists, but we can't expend additional funds until we receive information from the state.

Discussion continued in relation to the grant, and the town's reimbursement. Mr. Wolfram will further explore the budget at the next meeting of the Board of Oversight, to happen on February 19. The Chair requested that the SCEMS expenses stay 'broken out' from the main budget. The Administrator confirmed that was the case, as are SCEMS payroll and budgets are also 'broken out'.

Mr. Gilmore expressed concerns about the cost of employee benefits.

Ms. Warren spoke about OPEB, and about the difficulty of setting hard and fast figures related to OPEB, particularly given that our current numbers don't include SCEMS employment figures, or current town demographics.

Mr. Gilmore spoke about the dynamic, fluid nature of the plan, the fact that the numbers will change year to year, and that the town does have some obligation to begin doing something, or 'get caught behind the 8-ball.'

Ms. Warren suggested that the Town Clerk could provide more information in relation to OPEB.

Ms. Warren presented the board with summary, revenue and expense reports. Departmental budgets were also reviewed.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore,

To tentatively approve the 692-5400 - Veterans Day Expense budget.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore,

To tentatively approve 135-5110 – Accountant Salary budget.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

It was MOVED by Gilmore, SECONDED by Ness,

To tentatively approve 135-5400 – Accountant Expense budget.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

The board requested an update of the regular hours worked by the Accountant.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore,

To approve the 152-5400 - Personnel Board budget.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore,

To tentatively approve the 131-5400 - Finance Committee budget.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

There was discussion about the Contracted Services budget. Ms. Warren explained the changes to the budget, and the increases due to software changes. Ms. Ness asked about the costs of software related to water and sewer billing. Ms. Warren confirmed that software costs are being passed on to the WWTP.

There was some discussion about the role of Town Hall staff, and the processes by which bills are entered into the computer system, the savings (or not) to the town.

There was additional discussion in relation to 'efficiencies' as realized by software improvements, and the cost benefit to the town. There was additional discussion about the cost of the accounting software package, the cost of subscription / service fees.

Mr. Gilmore expressed his concern about the cost of the accounting services, and the fact that it may not result in a real cost savings to the taxpayers.

Wolfram: The bottom line – the accounting software was obsolete, and had to be replaced.

Gilmore: That's not the case. The software vendor didn't know why 'we' left.

Ness: The Town Treasurer and Accountant will have to provide more information in relation to the cost savings of this software.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To tentatively approve the 159-5410 - Contracted Services budget

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To tentatively approve the 172-5400 – Open Space Committee expenses

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To tentatively approve the 176-5400- Zoning Board budget

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To tentatively approve the 179-5400 – Agricultural Commission budget at \$250.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

It was noted that the finance committee reduced the Ag Commission budget to \$200.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To tentatively approve the 241-5410 – Inspections Expense budget (\$2,995)

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To tentatively approve the 230-5xxx – SCEMS Budget

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore

To tentatively approve the 830-5400 – FRCOG Assessment

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

Ms. Warren also conveyed the Fixed Assets List, as well as information from the CIPC meeting from the night before.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Upcoming Meetings are March 4, March 11, and March 18.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was MOVED by Ness, SECONDED by Gilmore,

To enter into Executive Session as allowed by M.G.L. c.30A §21(a)(6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property, the Chair so declaring that an open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body, and thereafter, to adjourn

ROLE CALL VOTE: Gilmore - Y, Ness - Y, Wolfram -Y

The board entered executive session at 8:50 PM.

Submitted,

Douglas C. Finn