

## **Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, February 6, 2012**

Present: Chairman Walter F. Alterisio, Daniel F. Devlin, Clerk and Procurement Officer and Member Kenneth J. Leva

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00pm with all members present. The Board met with Chief Rich relative to the Fire Department budget request. Chairman Alterisio presented the memo he'd prepared for distribution to the Fire Department relative to filling the position of Fire Chief from within. Chairman Alterisio referenced previous experience with the replacement of retiring Chief Bacon and comparisons to circumstances with the present Chief. Chairman Alterisio advised also taking a look at making sure no one is overlooked. Board approved notice as prepared by Chairman Alterisio- Chief will post notice at Fire Station.

Charlie advised that normally the last working day he has would be the 30<sup>th</sup> and will be having a little reception at the Fire Station – if it's alright, he'd like to see whoever is picked as his replacement be sworn in at the same time.

The board reviewed budget with Chief Rich-wages was at \$19,695 – increasing about \$5k – reason, like anything else – going out more. So far thru 31<sup>st</sup> of January which would be 58% - running @64%. Have a training session coming up this month – 24 hour course – which is mandatory, will eat into it; can't expect them to do all the training on their own. Thinks looking at probably close to \$3K for the course. Every call is \$10 for the 1<sup>st</sup> hour, after that go by ½ hour. He reported we have 2 companies for training only – training is split up; can show up for both but only getting paid for one session. Discussion continued on how companies are dispersed for training only. No split for fires, etc. only for the training. Brian indicated another reason for asking for increase, is they'd like to see trucks checked at least once a month...20 man hours a month for checking the trucks – by checking men become more familiar with the equipment. Brian indicated there's so much more involved than in the past.

Energy budget commensurate to the weather we've had – maintaining level funding. Water – level, maintenance and repairs is almost gone – going to go over on that item. Charlie explained the testing that has to be done and repairs needed. Brian presented projections for next year. Ventilation system recommended by MIIA is totally separate – running around \$45K – will be separate article. Right now the yearly things they have to do runs around \$6500 – roughly looking at \$7K without breakdown – looking at \$10K for next year. Chairman Alterisio reviewed some of the extraordinary expenses and repairs that needed to be done – noting they need to insure Advisory Board is advised. Brian elaborated on some of the items. The Board reviewed the remainder of the budget items with the Chief and Brian Rich, comparing the requests to the usage

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per the most recent burn sheet. Notation of new equipment @\$25K prompted discussion on how best to handle. Chief referred to breakdown of new equipment: pretty much where they are – but are a couple of pieces of equipment they'd like to get – set of jaws for the cutters. Chief advised with cars from 2010, 2011 up have made side cages a lot stronger – this type of cutter will upgrade equipment to better handle.

Chairman Alterisio basically pretty straight forward – taken look at Chief wages request and basically concurs on full time basis. Chief advised when he took the Chief's position, went to Brian, went to Gregg & Harold and each has done everything he asked. He provided background of where he learned how to do the job. All new equipment needs have been taken care of by Brian and training via Greg. Since they've improved their training, their rating has come way up – being called more frequently because of their training accomplishments. Brian reported on communication enhancements.

Chief Rich reported on building repairs – trim work on station addition where it was added on, haven't been able to get individuals to hang trim. Got a price on vinyl per Ron Mikol's recommendation – won't require painting. Chief Rich questioned how much we want to spend on the old building – advising he personally can't see putting money into it. Chairman Alterisio and the board advised that they can't see a new building coming into the picture any earlier than 3 years. Appetite at this point isn't looking good for that type of expenditure at this point. Charlie & Brian provided background on grant applications and discussed with the board the best approach at addressing the smaller items like trim, etc. The group also discussed the recommendations made by our insurance carrier.

Chairman Alterisio advised in years prior it's almost been to a fault, that didn't step up to the plate, but thinks that everyone is sensitive to where we are, coming along and are making every effort to address items in a reasonable manner. Chairman Alterisio is willing to go to task with the advisory board to support position.

Chief Rich reported he'd gotten estimates for the air handler equipment recommended by MIIA – \$39,100, \$31,500 for that equipment but doesn't address cost of upgrading electrical to handle it. The electrical upgrade was estimated by Ron Mikol @\$4350, but some uncertainty whether there could be a conflict of interest there. Chairman Alterisio advised on process that needs to be followed for the competitive bid. Charlie reviewed the differentiation in the bids he's received and discussion continued on the advantages, disadvantages of following or not following the insurance company's recommendations. Discussion continued on the options for transferring the equipment to a new facility –

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and whether the warranty would transfer as well. Also discussed were the legalities and complications with claims related to this type of injury/illness. Chairman Alterisio felt ought to address the problem we have now – and address new facility down the road, indicating probably looking at a multi-purpose facility not limited to just Fire Department. Equipment may not be appropriate for the new complex. Charlie – funny thing is that David Tully advised today that they (MIIA) never said anything about the highway garage during their inspection where they work on the trucks all the time. Chairman Alterisio recommended that this be a side bar to the Fincom for an approach for financing. Chief Rich advised that next grants are due in June, has spoken with company who indicated probably a good year's wait. Chief from Groton & Westford who got them via grants, have offered to provide their information for Dunstable's Fire to replicate.

Chairman Alterisio recommended keeping it separate. Chairman Alterisio asked for consensus for general agreement with budget as presented & board approved. Chief asked with redoing trim in back, should he have included it within budget or ask Fincom their preference. Selectman Devlin suggested the community work program might be the answer for painting the facility and will research possibilities with Middlesex sheriff's office.

Fire Chief Rich reported the stage curtains have been returned to Town Hall and briefly addressed the conditions of the old Snell house with the Board. The board advised they'd be with the Chief on the 27<sup>th</sup> for his presentation to Fincom.

Town Clerk approached the board with her proposal for including 5 hours into the accountant's clerical position; requesting – considering appropriations for some clerical assistance for her office. She reported that she needs some help has a very busy election year; bogged down – no backup, if anything happens to her, where would the town be. She advised she's not talking about people going in and voting, talking about certifying afterward; talking about certification, census, etc. that all has to be done on her state computer. She advised she's bogged down and thought was since Andy will be looking at new clerical help – might be able to combine together and provide some assistance – has dog licenses, etc. If she had some coverage, would eliminate some of the problems that come up when she can't be in the office – thinks it's not good business – know you think nothing is ever going to happen to her. Noted need for data entry for support for town accountant – looking @ about 7 hours a week. Carol estimated not more than a day a week – not all the time. She advised she's managed to do the necessary work because she's worked a lot of hours. She thought where we're going to be hiring an employee, why not take advantage of multiple tasks for someone.

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Chairman Alterisio advised that options for Town Accountant's assistance estimated @7 hours a week – may be looking at someone from within. Chairman Alterisio advised that if going to be looking for additional tasks, now going from 7 hours to like 16 hours per week, must have specifics. Asked if she sees a consistent need, Carol continued to explain the tasks that need to be addressed with elections, especially with the presidential election coming this fall. She advised she'd already told Sean that he's going to be on his own for chasing down dogs this year. She has 0 time to spend on a volunteer – wants someone that is able to do it when she's gone. Chairman Alterisio indicated no problem with having program where there's someone in place for a specific need but must be productive position. Carol advised that have someone here from BOH a few hours a week, just wanted to see if the Board was open to the concept or consider it worth researching. Chairman Alterisio advised while board is open some sort of program has to be put together for the position offering.

She advised that Accountant cannot work in Town Clerk's office as is restricted by law, uncertain whether assistant accountant's position can. She thinks there are a lot of people out there who would love the job. Selectman Devlin suggested providing description on paper.

She's worried individual would need to be bonded – could just go for an elections assistance then wouldn't need to worry about the bonding. She needs someone here when she's at the polls, etc. Shared board can get involved. She advised it's not in her budget, and she doesn't intend to include it, she'll just tell Fincom when she meets with them that the Board is going to be coming up with something.

Jim Tully stopped in to see if Chairman Alterisio had thought to follow up with Lions as to whether they might have an interest in joint venture, etc. for Circus Smirkus. Discussion continued on what the conflicts might be with any fund raising efforts by them. Jim's goal is to look at joint venture somehow – would like to work with Lions. He'll speak with officials and advise some of the problems encountering for this initial season. Discussion continued on best approach now and in the future. Chairman Alterisio advised there are some trust possibilities he's aware of that might assist in building facilities for investment. Discussion continued on the different options that might be available now and in the future.

Minutes of January 30<sup>th</sup> – Selectman Leva provided motion to accept as written, 2<sup>nd</sup> Selectman Devlin and voted with all in favor. The board also briefly continued discussion on the Town Clerk's clerical assistance request.

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Chairman Alterisio reminded Board of GDRSD's budget review scheduled for February 8<sup>th</sup> – Chairman Alterisio can attend.

He advised today he attended N.... presentation @NMCOG. Talked a little about some of the difficulties we encounter with transportation needs – where we don't have the expertise available within for engineering, and other related needs. Also noted aging population that want to stay within town but transportation limitations may make that unlikely. He noted that the need for Senior Assistance is growing – encouraged researching additional assistance for that department.

Board noted that Billerica had opted out of the regional 911 and discussed briefly. Selectman Devlin indicated he'd be speaking with Charlie further tomorrow about new equipment funding remaining – relative to next year's request.

The board decided to reschedule their meeting for President's Day week to Tuesday, the 21<sup>st</sup>. Selectman Leva advised he won't be available next week and Chairman Alterisio indicated he expects to be amongst the missing on the 27<sup>th</sup> and March 5<sup>th</sup>.

The request from Babcock Scholarship for use of the Grange Room – Thursday May 10<sup>th</sup> – approved. Request for use of the common and bandstand by Girl Scouts for their annual pet fair on April 28<sup>th</sup> was approved as well – appropriate cleanup essential.

Treasurer's warrants were reviewed and signed and the meeting adjourned at 8:30PM after appropriate motion and vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Danice N. Palumbo,  
Board Secretary