

MINUTES of January 10, 2005

A work session and business session of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 5:00 PM by acting Chairman Dominic C. Albanese in the Selectmen's conference room in Whitney Hall located off Main Street.

Present: Dominic C. Albanese, Acting Chairman
Nancy Scovner, Selectman
April Whittaker, Town Manager

Absent with Apologies: Keith Oppenneer

Administrative: The board signed a Quitclaim Deed for property located on Route 4A as offered by the Town annual sale of surplus property in 2004.

Business: The board discussed action with respect to deliverables for the Firewards, and work plan guidelines as charged to the Town Manager for composure for interaction with the elected Firewards.

The board requested that an invitation letter and copies of the deliverables be prepared for mailing to not only the Firewards, but also all members of the Fire Department, for a meeting scheduled for January 25th, 2005 at the Community Building at 6 :00 PM. Mr. Albanese volunteered to prepare the invite letter.

The board felt that the meeting would clarify whether or not a warrant article should be composed for the 2005 Town Meeting Warrant for dissolution of the Fireward system to an appointed system versus the current status of being elected.

The board discussed the composure and composition of the facilities committee given that conceptual plans had been submitted to the Building Needs Assessment Committee for the Town Offices and Library; the submission of the conceptual plans appears to form the end of the Committee's charge. Mr. Albanese and Mrs. Scovner both felt that a smaller committee composed, for example, of a Selectmen's representative, trustee representative, Town Manager, Library Director, Chair of the Assessment Committee and one ad hoc member could serve to facilitate the next steps in bringing forward a proposal for Town Meeting 2006. The board determined to discuss the same with the Trustees during their joint meeting to be held later in the evening.

Mr. Albanese and Mrs. Scovner spoke briefly regarding the Board's Report for the 2004 Town Report. Mrs. Scovner will assume responsibility for drawing up the same.

Work session ~ Budget 2005: Mrs. Whittaker provided to the board a memorandum denoting wage items and projects which had either been voted in at Town Meeting, or

were deficiencies such as bridge repairs, which were beyond the town's control. This would produce an estimated 33 cents on the tax rate over the prior rate and over and above the remainder of the budget.

Mrs. Whittaker addressed Account 4130, and advised that the increase was mainly due to implementation of GASB34, proposed survey and subdivision for Bicknell Brook property, and contracted services to assist with a departmental head hiring. Following discussion regarding the high cost associated with survey and subdivision for the Bicknell brook land area, Mrs. Whittaker was requested to seek request for proposals to see how the range of costs may fall. Mrs. Whittaker advised that GASB34 Fixed Asset Accounting should be considered as a priority ~ although not mandated it was important to ensure that our accounting system was in sync with best governmental practices. She felt that fixed asset imposition would only become more expensive in the future. Further, current staff had been attending orientation and education classes for such a change in accounting practices.

Account 4140 was reviewed and Mrs. Whittaker advised that in order to meet the 4% operational increase standard, another \$1036 would need to be cut and in her opinion, she advised that the budget was very tight as is, and gave no other recourse than to cut on salary lines, which she did not feel was prudent given Mrs. Higbee's difficulties for staffing in 2004. The Selectmen concurred.

Account 4150 was reviewed. Mr. Albanese asked Mrs. Whittaker to seek input re overtime issues for the financial assistant. Further the Board determined to level fund to an annual stipend of \$8,000 for the elected treasurer's position with an annual review of the stipend payment as compared to comparable communities. Mrs. Whittaker will discuss the same with Mrs. Schmanska. Mr. Albanese also requested Mrs. Whittaker to write to Mascoma Bank regarding bank fees as charged to the town.

Due to time restraints and agenda itemized meeting with the Library Trustees, the board discontinued review of the budget.

Meeting with Library Trustees, and Mr. McIntire of Architectural Studio

The board met with the library trustees, and Dave McIntire of Architectural Studio. Mr. Kiley was also invited to participate in the meeting. Mr. Albanese and Mrs. Scovner felt that the current facilities committee had fulfilled their charge of bringing to the table the conceptual plans as drawn up by Mr. McIntire, and requested advices from the Trustees as to the concept of the formation of a smaller committee to facilitate the next stages of review and design. The Trustees concurred and liked the suggestion by the Select board that the composition be as follows:

- 1 Selectmen's Representative
- 1 Trustee Representative

Town Manager
Library Director
1 member from the Facilities Committee (Dan Kiley)
1 Ad Hoc Member

Mrs. Whittaker advised that a local builder had shown interest in assisting the town in the next stages, and the board requested that she directly contact the individual on their behalf.

Mrs. Carr suggested to the joint boards that the current committee should run through to after town meeting and that in the interim the representatives will advise the facilities committee in order to begin preparation of their final report.

The selectmen and trustees discussed with Mr. McIntire what dollar amount may be required to facilitate the engineering phase of the conceptual design. Mr. McIntire presented various options as to how architectural fees are generated from various best management practices for construction. Following discussion, Mr. McIntire advised that \$15,000 ~ \$20,000 would be required. The board advised that they would propose such monies and suggest withdrawal from the capital reserve funds to fund the same.

There being no further business, motion Albanese, second Scovner to adjourn, vote 2 – 0. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,
April Whittaker*